

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che



Fire This Time!

VENEZUELA



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15 Years of War & Occupation



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KINDER MORGAN & THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE!

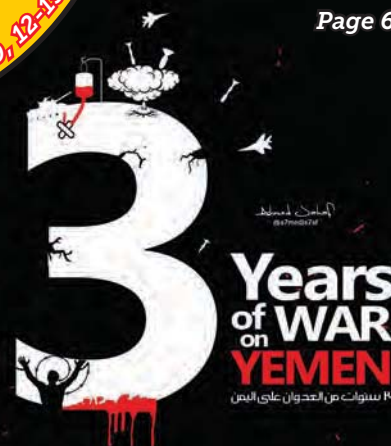


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By Janine Solanki

On March 19, 2013 the U.S. began what infamously was known as “Shock and Awe” - a massive bombardment of Baghdad, Iraq. Images broadcast worldwide showed a city engulfed in explosions, glowing under the fire of continuous bombing. In the first 21 days of that vicious initial assault, over 1700 air sorties were conducted, resulting in 320 civilians killed each day according to Iraq Body Count.

This is how the invasion of Iraq began, and now we

are marking 15 years of continued war and occupation carried out by the U.S. and their imperialist allies. Now over 1 million Iraqis have been killed as a result of the Iraq war, according to British polling group Opinion Research Business. Excuses and justifications from imperialist politicians for the war on Iraq have ranged from “war on terror” to “weapons of mass destruction”, and included claims of freeing Iraq from a dictator, and then from Daesh (aka

ISIS) a terrorist group which in reality was a creation of the imperialist occupation. From the beginning until today, the whole war on Iraq has been based on lies, manipulation and deception, propagated through mainstream media outlets and rhetoric from politicians. All of this effort was met with opposition. Leading up to the war on Iraq, the largest mobilizations in human history took place, culminating with 12 – 14 million people worldwide in coordinated antiwar protest on February 15, 2003.

After 15 years of imperialist, U.S.-led war and occupation, what state is Iraq in today? The physical destruction of

Iraq is massive, impacting electricity production and water treatment along with other vital infrastructure. By 2013, already 10 years after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the country still had only 30% of the electricity production provided prior to the occupation, according to Iraq’s ministry of electricity. The war and occupation has also destroyed many critical institutions, including Iraq’s healthcare and education system, leading to sharp declines in almost every standard of living you can imagine. Before the 2003 invasion, school enrollment rates were nearly 100% and Iraq was renowned for having one of the best education systems in the Middle East. By 2006 only 30% of Iraq’s children

cancer and leukemia exceed those reported by survivors of the atomic bomb catastrophe in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As we approach International Women’s Day on March 8, we must remember how war and occupation impacts women especially. The U.S. war and occupation has left 1.6 million Iraqi women widows (United Nations Mission in Iraq – UNAMI, March 21, 2015) although some estimates are as high as 3 million. As women struggle to provide for their families and to survive, many have been forced into prostitution. Rates of rape and violence against women have risen under occupation, and the trafficking of women and girls for sexual slavery has

IRAQ:

15 years after the military intervention and occupation



Iraqi women searches for her two children amid a explosion in central Baghdad

were enrolled in school, and in 2016 UNICEF reported the nearly 3.5 million school-aged children in Iraq attend school irregularly, or not at all.

Among the many health-related statistics which have suffered under the occupation, the rates of cancer and birth defects are the most horrifying. The rate of cancer in Iraq has increased by 40 times, mainly resulting from the U.S. military’s use of depleted uranium, especially in the city of Fallujah. A study titled “Cancer, Infant Mortality And Birth-Sex Ratio in Fallujah, Iraq 2005-2009”, concluded that the dramatic rise in infant mortality,

also skyrocketed, with estimates in the tens of thousands.

Since the start of the war, the U.S. has employed the strategy of divide and conquer. Divisions based on different ethnic groups and religious institutions were implemented and enforced, especially within Iraq’s previously secular government which under U.S. occupation was divided up between ethnic and religious identities. Communities, neighborhoods and institutions which had been made up of mixed ethnic and religious groups were segregated and divided, and intermarriage between

Top to bottom:

Residents of Mosul, Iraq, walk through the rubble of their neighborhood, where an airstrike attributed to the U.S. killed scores of people.

Iraqi family fleeing Baghdad, April 11, 2003.

Iraqi girl Samar Hassan screams after her parents were killed by U.S. soldiers when they fired upon the Hassan family car. January 18, 2005 in Tal Afar, Iraq.

Residents of Abu Dsheer, Baghdad wait for relief aid. September 8, 2018.



sects, which previously was a third of marriages, also dropped under U.S. occupation. After 15 years of U.S. intervention sowing animosity and infighting, civil war in Iraq continues.

After a decade and a half of war, an important question to ask is, why so much criminality and destruction? Since the U.S. lost her absolute hegemony over the Middle East following the Iranian Revolution of 1979, U.S. has been trying to find a way to regain complete hegemony in the region. The war on Iraq is part of a larger new era of war and occupation the U.S. has been conducting, which includes Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, and has Iran within its central targets.

The crisis in Iraq is only deepening, with a large number of Iraqis making up what is now the largest refugee crisis the world has ever seen as a result of imperialist war and occupation. The only way forward from this crisis, to overcome

infighting and rebuild Iraq, is for the U.S. and all imperialist forces to get out of Iraq. The people of Iraq are the force which has a vested interest in rebuilding their country, not any foreign or imperialist force.

As the people of Iraq are fighting for their self-determination, peace-loving people around the world have the responsibility to echo and fight for this demand until all imperialist forces are out of Iraq.



Iraqi boy points at U.S. soldier. Baghdad, Adhamiya district, January 5, 2008.

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When the Cuban revolution triumphed in January 1959, there was a clear, almost unanimous consciousness among the masses of people who identified with that victory over the things that needed to be changed in society. Among them was the electoral system, which was considered a factor in political corruption and the tyranny it led to.

During the first 15 years of the revolution in power, the slogan "elections, for what?" came from a reflection by the leader of the revolution, Fidel Castro. He spoke of the general feeling that the revolution should be the source of law and the instrument for the effective exercise of democracy.

The then-existing electoral system was a copy of the American system, imposed by the US military occupation that the island suffered from 1898 to 1902 and practiced, with slight adjustments, throughout the neocolonial stage until 1958. It was prepared as a capitalist instrument in favor of those candidates who mobilized more economic resources for their campaigns, which guaranteed that it was the commitments they made to the wealthiest financiers that would determine who would be the winning candidate.

In times of normality, every four years citizens enjoyed the right to choose the highest authorities of the nation from among candidates proposed by political parties that ensured the real exercise of power remained with an oligarchy that no one else had elected. A similar picture was presented on the rest of the continent.

When conditions permitted, dissenting forces took part in elections that did not represent a real danger to the control of the situation. If a serious threat was identified, recourse was made to the military coup d' état by elements of the official nature of the armed forces. Their loyalty to Washington's interests was guaranteed. The coup plotters would have to exercise power until "representative democracy" could be restored.

The electoral campaigns of the system's integrated political parties cost many millions of dollars. Candidate propaganda was rife in the press, radio and television, as well as on facades, poles, power lines and telephone lines.

Such an enormous investment, disproportionate to the misery suffered by the majority of the population, would then be

repaid to its benefactors by elected politicians through favours stemming from the most indecent corruption.

A new institutionality took shape in 1976, 15 years after the popular revolutionary triumph. A new electoral system began to be put into practice, embodied in the new Constitution, which, in turn, was massively discussed. More than 97% of the national electorate contributed and it was approved in a referendum that year.

The new system, which has been refined

draft nominations for delegates to the provincial assemblies and those of national deputies.

By law, these candidacies must be composed, by 50 per cent, of basic delegates and the rest selected from among proposals of outstanding personalities formulated by the social organizations - workers, peasants, women, students, neighbors and others - of the country and the provinces, as the case may be.

The Cuban electoral system is distinguished by the fact that it does no electoral party participates. The Communist Party of Cuba is not an electoral party, but the historical continuity of the one that José Martí organized to promote the unity of Cubans in order to achieve independence from Spain and prevent the absorption of Cuba by the United States in the way it did with Puerto Rico.

The National Assembly is the supreme organ of state power and the one that chooses its President, its vice president and its secretary, as well as the Council of State, the body that embodies it among its sessions. It has a collegial character and holds the supreme representation of the Cuban State.

The Cuban electoral system cannot be considered alternative to the model that the United States considers only acceptable, because it responds to a capitalist order and the Cuban, socialist, is infinitely more democratic and based on human solidarity.

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ELECTIONS AND TRUE DEMOCRACY IN CUBA

throughout many electoral events, promotes the most active popular participation. It empowers citizens to select, nominate, elect, control and revoke their representatives without intermediaries.

They elect the candidates in public meetings and then, by direct, secret and voluntary vote - from among all those candidates thus created - the delegates to the municipal assemblies of the People's Power.

It is the Municipal Assemblies, made up entirely of delegates directly elected at the base, which agree on the nominations of delegates to the Provincial Assemblies and those of Deputies to the National Assembly, who in turn will be voted on by the population also directly, secretly and voluntarily.

The candidacy committees - headed by representatives of the Cuban Central de Trabajadores and made up of representatives of social organizations - prepare and present



Por Manuel Yepe*

Cuando triunfó la revolución cubana en enero de 1959 había en las masas identificadas con aquella sacudida victoriosa conciencia clara, casi unánime, acerca de las cosas que habría que cambiar en la sociedad. Entre ellas estaba el sistema electoral, considerado un factor propiciador de la corrupción política y la tiranía a que condujo.

Durante los 15 años iniciales de la revolución en el poder, la consigna de "elecciones, ¿para qué?", surgida de una reflexión del líder de la revolución, Fidel Castro, hablaba del sentimiento general de que la revolución debía ser la fuente de derecho e instrumento para el ejercicio efectivo de la democracia.

El sistema electoral existente era copia del estadounidense, impuesto por la ocupación militar norteamericana que sufrió la isla desde 1898 hasta 1902 y practicado, con leves ajustes, en toda la etapa neocolonial hasta 1958. Estaba dispuesto como instrumento capitalista favorecedor de aquellos candidatos que movilizaran más recursos económicos para su campaña, lo que garantizaba que fueran los compromisos que adquirieran con los más acaudalados financistas los que determinarían quien sería el candidato ganador.

En tiempos de normalidad, la ciudadanía disfrutaba cada cuatro años del derecho a escoger a las máximas autoridades de la nación entre candidatos propuestos por partidos políticos que aseguraban el ejercicio real del poder a una oligarquía que nadie había elegido. Un cuadro similar se presentaba en el resto del continente.

Cuando las condiciones lo permitían, participaban en comicios fuerzas discrepantes que no significaran peligro real para el control de la situación y si se apreciaba una amenaza grave se recurría al golpe militar de Estado por parte de elementos de la oficialidad de las fuerzas armadas cuya fidelidad a los intereses de Washington estaba garantizada. Los golpistas habrían de ejercer el poder hasta que se pudiera regresar a la "democracia representativa".

Las campañas electorales de los partidos políticos integrados en el sistema costaban muchos millones de dólares. Pululaba la propaganda de candidatos en la prensa, la radio y la televisión, así como en fachadas, postes, tendidos eléctricos y telefónicos.

Tan enorme inversión, desproporcionada respecto a la miseria que padecía la mayoría de la población, sería retribuida luego a sus beneficiarios por los políticos elegidos mediante favores emanados de la corrupción

más impúdica.

Con la nueva institucionalidad que tomó cuerpo en 1976, 15 años después del triunfo revolucionario popular, entró en práctica un nuevo sistema electoral

ELECCIONES Y DEMOCRACIA VERDADERA EN CUBA

masivamente, con aportes y aprobación en referéndum de más del 97% del electorado nacional en ese año.

El nuevo sistema, que se ha ido perfeccionando a lo largo de muchos eventos comiciales, promueve la más activa participación popular y faculta a los ciudadanos para seleccionar, postular, elegir, controlar y revocar a sus representantes sin intermediarios. Eligen los candidatos en reuniones públicas y luego, mediante voto directo, secreto y voluntario - de entre todos esos candidatos así surgidos - a los delegados a las asambleas municipales del Poder Popular. Son las Asambleas Municipales, integradas totalmente por



En Cuba, la información sobre los candidatos electorales se muestra públicamente sin que los candidatos gasten dinero en campañas.

delegados directamente electos en la base, las que acuerdan las candidaturas de delegados a las Asambleas Provinciales y las de Diputados a la Asamblea Nacional, que a su vez serán votadas por la población también de manera directa, secreta y voluntaria.

Las comisiones de candidaturas - encabezadas por designados de la Central



de Trabajadores de Cuba e integradas por elegidos de las organizaciones sociales, elaboran y presentan los proyectos de candidaturas para delegados a las asambleas provinciales y a las de Diputados nacionales. Por ley, esas candidaturas deben estar integradas, en un 50%, por delegados de base y el resto seleccionados de entre propuestas de personalidades destacadas formuladas por las organizaciones sociales - obreras, campesinas, femeninas, estudiantiles, de vecinos y otras - del país y las provincias, según el caso.

Se distingue el sistema electoral cubano por el hecho de que no participa partido electoral alguno. El Partido Comunista de Cuba no es un partido electoral, sino la continuidad histórica del que José Martí organizó para promover la unidad de los cubanos para lograr la independencia de España y evitar la absorción de Cuba por Estados Unidos de la manera que lo hizo con Puerto Rico.

Es la Asamblea Nacional el órgano supremo del poder del Estado y el que elige de su seno a su Presidente, su vicepresidente y su secretario, así como al Consejo de Estado, órgano que la encarna entre sus períodos de sesiones. Tiene carácter colegiado y ostenta la suprema representación del Estado cubano.

El sistema electoral cubano no puede considerarse alternativo del modelo que Estados Unidos considera único aceptable, porque aquel responde a un orden capitalista y el cubano, socialista, es infinitamente más democrático y afincado en la solidaridad humana.

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By Azza Rojbi

Yemen is “the world’s largest man-made humanitarian crisis”. Those were the words of UN special envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, as he gave his final briefing to the UN security council on the situation in Yemen. In this briefing, not once were the daily aggression and airstrikes against the people of Yemen led by Saudi Arabia mentioned. He also made no mention of the cruel sea, air and land blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia on Yemen. Instead Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed highlighted Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates’ financial pledge “to support humanitarian action and reconstruction in Yemen”. This is a farce and a mockery thrown in the faces of the Yemeni people that continue to struggle for their lives under daily Saudi-led coalition bombing campaign!

On the same day, February 27, 2018, that Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed gave his speech, a Saudi airstrike killed five civilians and wounded at least 14, including children, outside the northern Yemeni city of Saada.

According to a Reuters photographer who witnessed the wreckage, a first airstrike hit and destroyed a house, then two further airstrikes followed targeting paramedics who were trying to save victims from under the debris.

This targeting and killing of civilians by the Saudi-led coalition and its allies is far from being an isolated occurrence. The Saudi government has a track record of

targeting civilian infrastructure including homes, schools, hospitals, universities, mosques, refugee camps, funeral and wedding halls, markets, sanitation facilities, cultural centre and even historical sites.

Humanitarian catastrophe

Backed by the United States, Saudi Arabia started its brutal war against Yemen in March 2015, claiming that it wants to bring peace and stability to the country by reinstating to power their puppet, former president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

Today, after 3 years of indiscriminate and brutal bombing campaign on Yemen, more than 15,000 people have been killed and thousands more have

been injured. According to the United Nations, a record 22.2 million people (80% of population) are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 8.4 million threatened by severe hunger.

The bombing of vital civilian infrastructure and the continuation of the criminal land, air and sea blockade on Yemen have aggravated the humanitarian situation. The lack of food, medicine and proper health facilities plunged the country into a cholera outbreak with over 1 million recorded cases around the country as per the World Health Organization (WHO). In addition to cholera, diphtheria is making an alarming comeback into Yemen, with over 1000 suspected cases. Diphtheria is a highly contagious bacterial infection of the nose and throat that can be fatal if left untreated. According to WHO, already 66 have died of the disease, 47% of them are children under the age of 5.

Yemeni women struggle under the war

According to an article by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) dating to March 23, 2017 : “Yemen already has one of the highest maternal death rates in the Arab region. But food scarcity is putting the lives of 352,000 pregnant women at risk, and it could harm the health of 2.2 million women of childbearing age who are in urgent need of assistance and protection, according to UNFPA calculations from January 2017.

Some 52,800 pregnant women are at risk of life-threatening complications during childbirth. Meanwhile, the conflict has caused a dramatic breakdown in health services. An estimated 14.8 million people lack access to basic health care, including reproductive health care. Medical supplies are in chronically



Housing block destroyed by Saudi airstrikes on Yemen's capital city Sana'a. Sept 29, 2017

Sit-in protest against Saudi bombings. In front of the United Nations office in Sana'a. March 14, 2017.



short supply. Only 45 per cent of health facilities are functioning, and only 35 per cent of these provide maternal and newborn services.”

In addition to their own suffering, Yemeni women are bearing the brunt of the suffering of their families and community under the war. In a lot of cases, they find themselves the only one left to care for and feed their families. Despite their lives being gravely affected by the war on their country, Yemeni women are staying resilient and strong in the face of the Saudi-led aggression on their country.

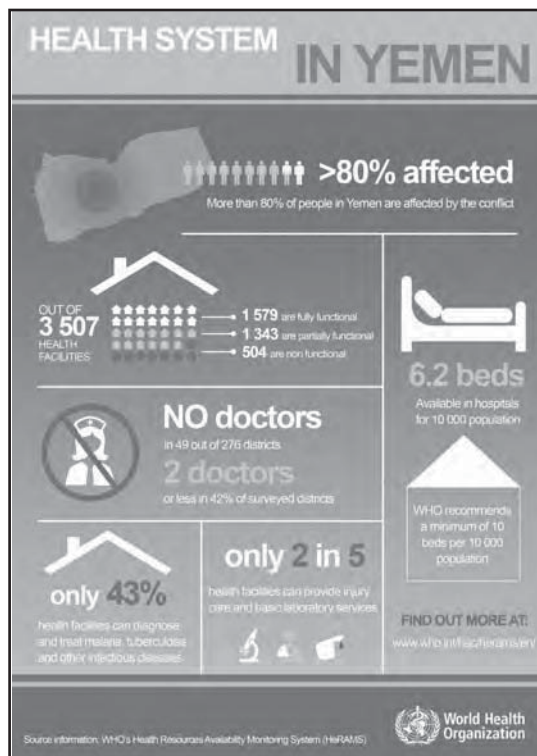
Last year in March 2017, marking International Women's Day IWD, Yemeni women staged a three-day sit-in outside the UN office in the capital city of Sana'a, demanding an end to the US-backed war on their country. Pictures from the protest showed women and girls of all ages, carrying Yemeni flags and

signs calling for the lifting of the Saudi air, land and naval blockade on Yemen. This year again Yemeni women will be marking IWD by standing up for their families and their country and protesting against the atrocious Saudi-led coalition war on their beloved country.

End the war! #KefayaWar

Despite being politically, militarily and logistically supported by the United States, the UK and other major imperialist countries, the Saudi government is failing to achieve any of its so called goals in Yemen. As we enter the third year of the war, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi is still hiding in his masters' palace in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and the people of Yemen are facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The United States government is a direct accomplice of this humanitarian catastrophe. "It is U.S. refueling planes flying in the sky around Yemen that restock the Saudi fighter jets with fuel, allowing them to drop more ordnance... It is U.S.-made ordnance that is carried on these planes and dropped on civilian and infrastructure



targets inside Yemen. The United States is part of this coalition. The bombing campaign that has caused the cholera outbreak could not happen without us.” Those were the words of US Senator Chris Murphy speaking from the senate floor on November 14, 2017.

It is not only the U.S. that continues selling arms to Saudi Arabia and its allied coalition. Its neighbour to the north Canada, has been trying to keep quiet the fact that in 2016 “Saudi Arabia was the largest non-U.S. importer of Canadian-made military goods.” as the National Post reported. The Canadian government is also moving ahead with a \$15 billion arms deals to supply Saudi Arabia with light-armored vehicles LAV which come equipped with heavy guns and cannon.

As peace loving people in Canada, and around the world we must stand next to our brothers and sisters in Yemen in their resistance against the Saudi-led war on their country. We must keep our imperialist governments accountable for their complicity in the crimes committed against the brave and innocent people of Yemen.

**US/Saudi Arabia Hands off Yemen!
 All Foreign Troops Out of Yemen!
 Stop Bombing Yemen!
 Lift the Naval, Aerial and Land
 Blockade on Yemen!**

Follow Azza Rojbi on Twitter:
 @Azza_R14



On March 11, 2018 Cubans will be electing their next national assembly, and based on the candidates, it is anticipated that Cuba's next parliament will be over 53% female. If these candidates are ratified, Cuba will rank second in the world for the highest participation of women in parliament.

The last election for Cuban parliament was held in 2013 and Cuba's national parliament became the third highest in the world in terms of their high representation of women (below only Rwanda and Bolivia) at 48.9% female.

Canada, on the other hand, was very excited to announce after the federal election in 2015 that 88 women were elected to parliament (a national record!), the Canadian Broadcast Corporation published an article reminding us, "50% population, 25% representation. Why the parliamentary gender gap?" They explain, "A record 88 women were elected in the 2015 federal election, up from 76 in 2011. The increase represents a modest gain in terms of representation, with women now accounting for 26 per cent of the seats in the House." This actually leaves Canada at 64th place in terms of the percentage of women in national government compared to countries around the world.

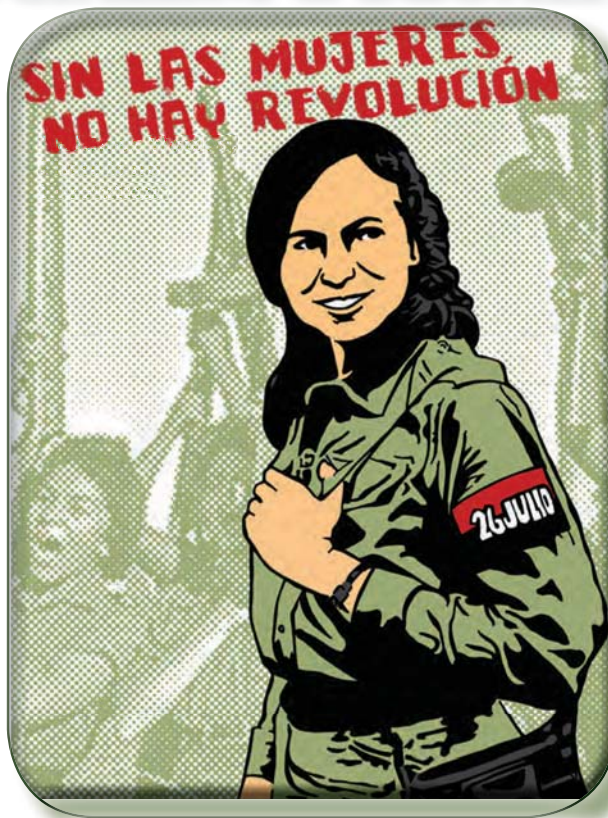
For Cuban women, the gains are not only in the national government. In November 2012, Adela Hernandez was the first openly trans person in Cuba to be elected in the municipal elections in Caibarien, Villa Clara province. Since 2007 sex-change surgery has been made available for free to trans people in Cuba under their universal health care system. These are important gains made for women's rights, no matter their gender assigned at birth.

On February 28, 2018 the New York Times published the article, "Goodbye Castros, Hello Communist Party." The article rails against Cuba's so-called authoritarian government, however it was widely criticized on Twitter for the photo it used of Cuba's parliament, which

demonstrates its diversity in terms of age, gender, and race. A few tweeted side-by-side photos with American and Canadian elected officials to remind people of the deep contradiction of the New York Times critiquing Cuba's electoral system, while both the U.S. and Canada have so-called democracies which do not reflect society.

The article also accuses Cuba of nepotism

CUBAN WOMEN & THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM & EQUALITY



CELEBRATING MARCH 8TH INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

related to Cuban President Raul Castro's children. It explains, "Mr. Castro's son and daughter will remain in powerful positions, as well. His son, Alejandro, is influential at the Ministry of the Interior, and his daughter, Mariela, is a member of the National Assembly and the head of Cuba's most important gender think tank, Cenesex. Alejandro is known for his love for efficiency, and Mariela for her love for L.G.B.T. causes. But neither is known for a love of liberal politics." Usually the bourgeois North American media accuses

the Cuban government of homophobia, but here they briefly acknowledge the revolutionary work of Mariela Castro (as the Director of Cuba's Centre for Sex Education - CENESEX), but as if it is a joke, rather than an important grassroots movement supported by government institutions in Cuba.

It is also important to note that Cuba's constitution includes a special article for women and gender equality. Article 44 states, "Women and men enjoy equal economic, political, cultural, social, and familial rights. The State guarantees that women will be offered the same opportunities and possibilities as men to achieve their full participation in the development of the country. [...] The State strives to create all the conditions that will lead to the implementation of the principle of equality." This is an important part of the protection and advancement of women rights under law. Of course, laws for gender equality can always be passed, the question is always if those laws are respected and implemented by government

The dynamism of Cuban women & the Cuban Federation of Women

Even if we ignored the gains of Cuban women in parliament, there are other gains in health, education and everyday life that we can learn from.

Since Comandante Fidel Castro and his revolutionary guerilla fighters began their struggle for revolution with the attack on the Moncada army barracks in 1953, there have been courageous women involved in the struggle. Melba Hernández, Celia Sánchez, Vilma Espín, H y d é e

Santamaría, and the all-women Mariana Grajales Brigade are some famous examples of the importance of women's leadership in the Cuban revolution.

Fidel Castro said, "They talk about the failure of socialism, but where is the success of capitalism in Africa, Asia and Latin America?" The fight for women's equality in Cuba has not been easy and is not finished. However, it is only thanks to Cuba's socialist revolution and ongoing socialist project, that the space has been

opened for women to push forward and advance their causes. This means striving towards equality between genders and an end to the exploitation of one human being by another. Has Cuba totally eradicated sexism and patriarchy? NO! Both Cuban women and men will tell you, they have a long ways to go.

Since 1960, the Cuban Women's Federation (FMC), a mass organization, has been developing policies and programs aimed at achieving full equality for women in all spheres and levels of Cuban society. Among the objectives of this organization is to contribute to the training and well-being of the next generations. The FMC has thousands of branches across the country at the grassroots level, as well as, municipal, provincial and national offices. They organize "Casas de Orientación a la Mujer y la Familia" (Women and family orientation houses), workshops, forums, a magazine, online blogs, laws and policies for workplaces, intuitions and government, and even community block parties.

Access to affordable childcare gives women the possibility to further contribute to society and the economy. In Cuba there are many work places that have free childcare centres to encourage women to participate in the economy and make life easier for Cuban families. In fact, a decreasing birthrate in Cuba, along with aging population, which is generally only a problem in industrialised or 'first world' countries, is leading to some changes in Cuban law. In February 2017, the Washington Post published an article titled, "Cuba wants more babies, so it's giving parental leave to grandparents, too." Journalist Nick Miroff writes, "The island already has one of the most generous parental leave policies in the Americas, allowing mothers and fathers to take more than a year off from work at partial pay. The new decree extends those benefits to maternal and paternal grandparents." This is an interesting new initiative, which demonstrates how Cuba attempts to confront challenges, such as a low birth rate and aging population, in dynamic and creative ways.

In June 2015 the New York Times published another article, "The Cuban woman: A rising power," which explained, "Cuba consistently ranks high in international surveys regarding women's status, standing at 18 among 142 nations in women's political empowerment and at number two for percentage of women in parliament, according to the 2014 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report. By contrast, the United States



is ranked at 54 in women's political empowerment and 83 for women in parliament (U.S. Senate and U.S. House)." Continuing, the article explains, "Today, women make up nearly half of [Cuba's] work force and more than half of university faculties, and hold top portfolios in the ministries."

Wilma Espin, President of the Cuban Federation of Women until her passing in 2007, once said, "Socialism for Cuban women means freedom, independence, sovereignty, dignity, social justice, security for the education and development of their children, the right to equality, to life, to decide their own destiny, to work for the future dreamed of and defended with all forces."

In an interesting observation, Margaret Randall, an American feminist and author of the ground breaking book "Cuban Women Now" (1972), was in Havana last February to launch the Spanish version of her autobiography, "To Change the World: My Years in Cuba" (Rutgers UP, 2009) / "Cambiar el mundo. Mis años en Cuba (Ediciones Matanzas, 2016). In an interview with Cuban Art News, she spoke about her time living in Cuba from 1969-1980. She explains, "Cuba gave me so much: a life experience in a socialist country that taught me it is possible to build a more just society. I don't know what I gave Cuba, and in any case it's for others to say. I know that at times my feminism was too much for the Cuba of those years. My opinions and attitudes weren't always well received. With the passage of time, I think we've come closer together, Cuba and I." This is the power of the Cuban revolution, a constant evolution and moving forward, correcting mistakes and finding new solutions, this is why it is a truly dynamic revolution.

Celebrate March 8 – International Women's Day

Every year International Women's Day (IWD) is a time for women around the world to reflect on the gains and challenges our gender continues to face.

At the same time, fighting for women's equality and liberation is not only for women, but for all of humanity. Firstly, because one of the most important steps to improving the lives of all children, is the empowerment of women. Secondly, because the deeply harmful ideology and values that capitalist patriarchy forces on men not only debase and demean women, but men as well. While women are often referred to as a 'minority' we are 51% of the human race, which deserves to find its rightful and equal place in this world.

While Cuba is not perfect, it is an important example of the accomplishments women can make when society sets the elimination of inequality as a real goal in law, policy and action.

Of course, capitalism relies on keeping us divided. The capitalist system relies on dividing and conquering to rule. That is why sexism, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and so many other forms of division and oppression are consistently used to convince working and oppressed people that they have more in common with the wealthy ruling class, than with each other. It is because of this that there will be no true liberation for women until capitalism is abolished.

On March 8, 2018 women around the world will celebrate the gains our sisters have made in struggles for women's equality and liberation worldwide. We must understand how far we have come, in order to also understand how far we have to go.

Follow Tamara Hansen on Twitter: @THans01

The Hidden Costs of the Site C Dam

An Interview with Wendy Holm



By Thomas Davies

The BC Hydro Site C Dam in Northern B.C. has been a failed project since the 1970's when it was proposed, opposed and shelved. The 60-meter-high mega dam would cost over 10 billion dollars to create power BC Hydro says we don't need now but might in the future. Indigenous Nations whose territories Site C would flood point out under Treaty 8, they have entrenched constitutional rights to hunt, trap and fish on the would be flooded land. Economists have shown that construction costs of Site C would create at least \$5000 in debt for every household in BC, and environmentalists have pointed out that any future energy needs could easily be met for cheaper prices by renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

Many had hoped that with the election of the NDP as the BC provincial government that the project would again be cancelled based on the NDP's pre-election promises. Especially when the BC Utilities Commission tabled a highly critical report finding that Site C was behind schedule, would be over 2 billion over budget, and had unresolved risks including tension cracks.

Unfortunately, NDP Premier John Horgan announced that the project was "past the point of no return" and that they could move forward with construction. This has been met with continued resistance, led by the West

Moberly and Prophet River First Nations, whose land would be flooded if the project continues.

Wendy Holm has been an important part of this resistance. The past president of the B.C. Institute of Agrologists, resource economist and award-winning columnist, – she has recently released a new book titled, "Damming the Peace – The Hidden Costs of the Site C Dam" (Formac Lorimer Books, 2018) which is a comprehensive compilation of the many reasons the project is such a disaster.

Below is a Fire This Time interview with Wendy Holm about the Site C Dam, the ongoing resistance to the project and her important new book.

Could you share with us some of the history of how you got involved in the campaign to stop the Site C Dam?

I got involved as a professional and my involvement has remained as a professional. I was asked by the Peace Valley Environment Association and the BC Womens Institute who were intervenors in the Site C Environmental Impact Assessment process to do an analysis of the agricultural impact of the Site C Dam. As an agri-economist I spent a lot of time studying all the materials and then presented my findings as an expert witness before the Joint Federal-Provincial Review Panel on the Site C Dam.

What I learned as an Agrologist about the impact of this project appalled me. I assumed that we would have had more traction at the Joint Review Panel and then I assumed we would have certainly had a lot of traction at the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC). I am appalled that it's going ahead because not only the agricultural value- but so many other values are just transgressed by this project which makes no sense at all. When I did the work as an expert witness I was a Professional Agrologist (P.Ag.). I have since retired but I have stayed involved as progression speaking about the implications of the project on agriculture and food security issues.

"The fight to stop Site C is not over. Damming the Peace is our roadmap."

— Maude Barlow, author and activist

Since the 1970s, the Site C Dam in northeastern British Columbia's Peace River Valley has been touted by BC Hydro and successive governments as necessary to meet the province's increasing energy needs. With its enormous \$10 billion price tag, the dam would be the largest public works project in B.C. history. It would be the third dam on the Peace River, and destroy traditional unceded territory belonging to Treaty 8 First Nations.

Despite protests by Indigenous groups and landowners, several lawsuits against the government, and a call from a United Nations panel to review how the dam will affect Indigenous land, the latest water megaproject that is dividing British Columbia is going ahead.

This book presents the independent voices of citizen experts describing every important impact of the dam, including sustainable energy expert Guy Dauncey, Indigenous activist Helen Knott, Agrologist Wendy Holm, family physician Warren Bell, wildlife biologist Brian Churchill, former environmental minister Joan Sawicki, energy industry watchdog Andrew Nikiforuk, award-winning broadcaster Rafe Mair, world-renowned water ecologist David Schindler, and investigative journalist Joyce Nelson, among others.

WENDY HOLM is a retired Agrologist, a columnist, author and speaker. She has been named a Distinguished Alumna of UBC, and has received two Queen's Medals for contribution to community. She has won ten national journalism awards since 2002. She lives on Bowen Island, British Columbia.

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Damming the Peace

The Hidden Costs of the Site C Dam

Edited by Wendy Holm

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PEACE

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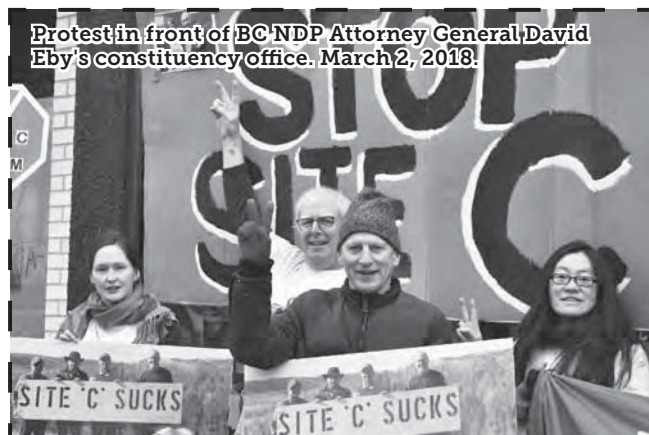
EDITED BY WENDY HOLM

I just have not been able to step back from this. I've been Professional Agrologist in Canada for over 40 years and, with the exception of the dismantling of the Canadian Wheat Board, I have never seen such a transgression of public policy. It is such a transgression of public policy that it really strikes and issues of democracy. So I have not been able to walk way.

If you're talking to someone who hasn't heard about the project before, how do you summarize the project and the reasons you're opposed to it?

I'm pretty careful to make sure I stay within my area of expertise, as an Agrologist. I'll tell you the agricultural impact, and then that leads into why I wrote the book because I wanted others to speak, about the other aspects.

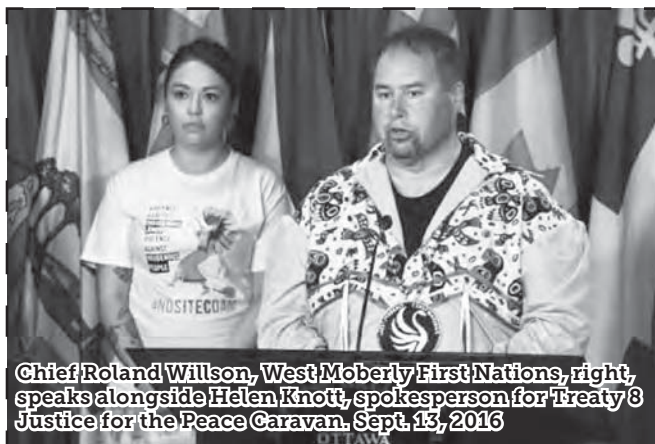
So the Site C Dam will impact over 30,000 acres of agricultural land. It will flood half that land with water. The rest of the land will have stability and wave impact issues. Of the land that is flooded almost ten thousand acres of that is really high quality agricultural land. In a Class 1 climate for agriculture, which makes it some of the most important horticulture land in all of Canada. I say to people who don't understand agriculture, "If you were a vegetable, you would pray your children grow up in a alluvial soil." Alluvial soils are riverbed soils. They are free draining soils and horticulture needs to be constantly irrigated so they need these free draining alluvial soils to grow veggies. These alluvial soils combine with the Peace River valley running East-West. It's one of the very few East-West running valleys in BC. So the sun gets up in the morning in the east, travels the length of the valley, and then goes down at its westerly end in the evening. Where most of our north-south running valleys have mountains on the East and West - so there is a little window of sun in the middle of the day. The Peace River valley gets full sunshine all day and because of the micro-climate and because of the latitude in the summertime where you get so many hours of daylight - this Peace



Protest in front of BC NDP Attorney General David Eby's constituency office. March 2, 2018.



The "Stake in the Peace" campaign has raised over \$80,000 to cover costs of fighting the mega-project.



Chief Roland Willson, West Moberly First Nations, right, speaks alongside Helen Knott, spokesperson for Treaty 8 Justice for the Peace Caravan. Sept. 13, 2016

River valley has the same capability as the Fraser and Okanagan valleys. It has the same crop capabilities with higher yields because of the higher periods of daylight. We're talking about 10,000 acres of prime prime horticulture soil that are going to be destroyed by this dam.

BC imports over 60% of the vegetables we could grow here, and we import from California and Mexico - both of which are suffering all sorts of constraints for production - water being one of them. So to be over 60% dependent on an area like California makes no sense at all in terms of the prices and continuity

of supply. Vegetables are the building blocks of life. You can't give kids vegetable flavoured chips and think you're giving them veggies. 1 in 4 children is under the poverty line in B.C. and you're pricing vegetables out of children's diets.

From a food security standpoint this land is exceptionally important. It has the productive capacity to meet the nutritional requirements of between 1 and 2 million people a year - forever. When you look at the rights of today's generation and the rights of future generations - none of these issues have been taken into consideration in the process of evaluating the costs of this dam. We've looked at energy and it's become clear that it makes no sense on an energy standpoint, but we have not looked at the other issues. When you add up the cumulative impact of this dam and you include issues like food security, biodiversity, the impact on First Nations cultural heritage, issues of human health, the impact on the Athabasca Delta, the way Site C supports fracking in the North and other concerns - you begin to understand why it is absurd on a public policy level that we would go forward with this project.

There's one other area that's a really important impact of this. When I finished my work as an Agrologist and I made my presentation to the Joint Panel and I saw the area of food being ignored, and all these other areas ignored. I became frustrated and I thought, "How can any government be so unconnected with the needs and the rights of its citizens?" At some point the government was supposed to say, "Gee. We made a mistake." Even the Liberals before the NDP should have said, "We hear what you're saying and we're going to come up with some other options." They didn't. They forged ahead with this to get it past "the point of no return" and that starts to sound pretty bizarre. Why would they say that? So no one can stop this? Because it's not about energy, so what's it about?

I was rummaging around in my closet and my hand hit upon a PVC tube with some maps in it. In 1988, I produced the

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Interview Tatiana Vizcaya

Second Consul, Consulate General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Vancouver



By Alison Bodine

"For me, the cutting edge is the political participation of women in Venezuela. We are at the forefront of the feminist political struggle." Interview with Tatiana Vizcaya, Second Consul at the Consulate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Vancouver.

In February, Fire This Time sat down with Tatiana Vizcaya, Second Consul at the Consulate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Vancouver. In order to mark the occasion of International Women's day, we discussed the gains that the women of Venezuela have made within the Bolivarian revolutionary process, and the leading role that women are taking on in Venezuelan society today.

Fire This Time: Thank you very much for making time to do this interview with **Fire This Time**, even though I know you are very busy right now. We were excited to learn that a young Venezuelan was going to be working at the Venezuelan Consulate here in Vancouver, and today I am looking forward to sitting down with you to talk about women in Venezuela. Since beginning in 1998, the Bolivarian revolution has created great gains for oppressed people, and especially for women. Now that March 8 International Women's Day is almost here, we wanted to take advantage of this and to do an interview that is focused on women's revolution in Venezuela.

Ms. Vizcaya: I am very grateful to have come together for this occasion. Thank you on behalf of my government as well.

FTT: Thank you again for this opportunity. One of the most important

advancements made by women in Venezuela is the establishment of the Venezuelan Ministry for Women and

Gender Equality. Can you tell us more about the work of this ministry and the "Mama Rosa" Plan?

Ms. Vizcaya: The ministry was created in the Bolivarian process thanks to Comandante Chávez, who placed great emphasis on gender relations, equality and the protection of the family as the basis of society.

Venezuela is, for me, a country of women. Let me give you an example of this. In my household there are four women. Before 1998, only one of us worked, only one of us was included in the economic system. Now, after the arrival of President Chávez, all four of us are working. It is a great achievement.

Another thing that I can tell you is that the Ministry of Popular Power for Women and Gender Equality is responsible for mainstreaming a gender-based approach in the making of public policies.

Policies created by the state to guarantee empowerment and participation in building a more just, equal and peaceful society. The construction of this society, as established by our constitution and legal order, is what brings us together at this moment.

For me to tell you about the Ministry of Popular Power for Women, it is quite important that I tell you about some of their plans and what they are working towards. I'm not going to tell you everything, but I'm going to refer you to some of their work.

For example, there is the "Argelia Laya" National Plan which directs feminist training in gender equality and non-discrimination. As well there is "CAFIM", the Comprehensive Training Center for Women. CAFIM is a public policy entity that gives primary care to women that are victims of violence. We also have the "Women and Gender Equality Committees," and the "Community Defenders."

As the Ministry of Popular Power for Women governs a broad array of programs, it also works with the "Eva Perón"

"Indestructible Women" at a popular assembly. October 5, 2017.



School. “Eva Pernaleté” is a school of agricultural training and production that works towards food sovereignty and gender equality.

We also have the “Homeland is a Woman” program for women diagnosed with breast cancer.

As you referred to in this question, another one of the programs is the “Mama Rosa” Plan, which was created for 2013-2019 within the Plan of the Homeland. Specifically, I can say that the “Mama Rosa” Plan is central in the expanding the inclusion and political participation of women. One of this program’s fundamental goals is to take patriarchy out of the highest levels of decision making and the candidacies of popular election. The “Mama Rosa” Plan works to include and empower women within the political front of struggle.

Of course, this is within the framework of the President Chávez’ legacy. When the “Mama Rosa” Plan was created in 2013, it was an emotional moment for us Venezuelans because President Chávez had died. However, precisely when the “Mama Rosa” Plan was established, a strategy was created to give continuity to the feminist character that Chávez always exhibited. In fact, if I remember correctly, in a women’s assembly in October 2010, the President publicly declared himself a feminist.

The “Mama Rosa” Plan is very important because, so far, in the hands of President Nicolás Maduro, it has given continuity to the feminist character that must be present in the current revolutionary process.

FTT: The newly elected National Constituent Assembly is led by Delcy Rodríguez, has a high number of elected women representatives, can you tell us what percentage of the National Constituent Assembly are women and what role they are playing to advance the goals of the National Constituent Assembly?

Ms. Vizcaya: That a woman is the one who presides over the National Constituent Assembly is affirmation of the continuity of the legacy of President Chávez. Of course, this continuity comes from, or in this case, continues through, our president Nicolás Maduro. President Nicolás Maduro has always emphasized the feminist character that must remain within the Bolivarian revolution.

I recall that the first sessions of the National Constituent Assembly were dedicated to women and gender equality as we were just coming from the reality

of the National Constituent Assembly election, during which many women were knocked down and intimidated by opposition violence.

30% of the deputies elected in the National Constituent Assembly are women; indigenous women, working women, young women, elder women; all are participating in the 21 commissions of the Assembly. One of the 21 commissions that make up the National Constituent Assembly is the commission of women and gender equity.

The revolutionary character of this process owes everything to President Chávez for what he said to us during his life, that the feminist character of the revolution must remain.

For me, the cutting edge is the political participation of women in Venezuela. We are at the forefront of the feminist political struggle.

FTT: Since the election of Comandante Chávez and the beginning of the Bolivarian revolutionary process in 1998, what would you say are the gains that have been made for women’s rights in Venezuela?

Ms. Vizcaya: The first thing that I would like to establish is that our current constitution marks a milestone, because it is the first Magna Carta that uses gender inclusive language. Following this, there is the creation of the Bank for the Development of Women in 2001 and the creation of an law on the right of women to live free of violence. This law identifies 19 types of violence against women and establishes mechanisms of defense, action and protection. In 2009, we also have the creation of the Ministry of Popular Power for Women and Gender Equality.

For me, these are great achievements of the revolutionary process. Before 1998, women never played such an important role, and their role was never as defended as it today. These achievements are thanks to the revolutionary process and also thanks to the feminist character of President Chávez, as well as President Maduro’s continued policies for women.

As President Chávez said, “Venezuela has a woman’s name.” In fact, from what I know, no other leader like President Chávez has dared to say publicly that they were a feminist. That is why the President made such an impact. Today, we can

continue to work towards this goal thanks to President Nicolás Maduro.

FTT: Venezuela is facing attacks and sabotage from the U.S. government and their imperialist allies, who are attempting to block the progress of the Bolivarian revolutionary process. Within this, what do you think are the main challenges for women responding to these attacks and advancing the Bolivarian revolutionary process in Venezuela today?

Ms. Vizcaya: President Chávez declared to the world that he was a socialist and feminist and gave a leading role to women in public policy making in our country. I remember one of his messages for International Women’s Day. The President said, “Women are vital in the construction of the socialist homeland. Keep on taking on the role of the vanguard, and save the homeland with your love, passion, intelligence and sharpness.”

Listen, we as women must continue to be on the front-line of struggle. We must continue to be on the frontline of political struggle, on the front-line of organizational struggle. We must continue fighting for ourselves to be included in all aspects, including the industrial economic aspects, so that we can defend our homeland, together with the revolution. We, as women, must continue and we must encourage the organization of society. Precisely because we are a society where women are the majority. We must continue organizing, we must continue fighting, and we must continue defending the revolutionary process in organization and in peace.

FTT: Is there anything else that you would like to tell our readers?

Ms. Vizcaya: Venezuela today is facing an unequal world. Everything that is happening in our country has a historical importance. That is why the struggle continues.

FTT: Thank you for the interview today.

Delcy Rodríguez.
President of the
Constitutional
Assembly of
Venezuela



Entrevista con Tatiana Vizcaya

Cónsul de Segunda, Consulado General de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela en Vancouver

¡Mujeres en la Revolución Bolivariana!

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

Por Alison Bodine

"En la actualidad, la participación política de la mujer en Venezuela para mí es de vanguardia. Nosotras estamos en la vanguardia de la lucha política feminista."

Entrevista con Tatiana Vizcaya, Segunda Cónsul en el Consulado de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela en Vancouver.

En febrero, Fire This Time se sentó con Tatiana Vizcaya, Segunda Cónsul en el Consulado de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela en Vancouver. Con motivo de conmemorar el Día Internacional de la Mujer, discutimos los logros que las mujeres de Venezuela dentro del proceso revolucionario bolivariano y el papel de liderazgo que las mujeres están asumiendo en la sociedad revolucionaria en venezolana de hoy.

Fire This Time (FTT): Muchas gracias por su tiempo para hacer esta entrevista con Fire This Time, aunque sé que estás muy ocupado en este momento. Estábamos emocionados de saber que



una joven venezolana iba a trabajar en el Consulado de Venezuela aquí en Vancouver, y estoy entusiasmada por sentarme con usted para discutir sobre las mujeres en Venezuela hoy. Desde comienzos de 1998, la revolución bolivariana ha creado grandes logros para las personas oprimidas, y especialmente para las mujeres. Ahora que el 8 de marzo el Día Internacional de la Mujer ya casi está aquí, queríamos aprovechar para hacer una entrevista centrada en la revolución de las mujeres en Venezuela.

Sra. Vizcaya: Muy agradecida que me hayan tomado encuentra y se hayan acordado en esta ocasión de mí. Muchísimas gracias en nombre de mi gobierno también.

FTT: Gracias a usted. Uno de los avances más importantes realizados por las mujeres en Venezuela es el establecimiento del Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Mujer y la Igualdad de Género. ¿Puede decirnos más sobre el trabajo de este ministerio y el plan "Mama Rosa"?

Sra. Vizcaya: Te cuento, el Ministerio fue creado en el proceso bolivariano, gracias al comandante Chávez que puso gran énfasis en las relaciones de género, de igualdad y de la protección de la familia como base de la sociedad.

De hecho, Venezuela es, para mí, un

país de mujeres. Te doy un ejemplo de esto, nosotras en mi casa somos cuatro mujeres. Antes de 1998, solamente una trabajaba. Solamente una de nosotras estaba incluida en el sistema económico. Luego de la llegada del presidente Chávez, horita en este momento las cuatro estamos trabajando. Es un gran logro.

Otra cosa que te puedo decir es que el Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Mujer y la Igualdad de Género en este momento es el único responsable de transversalizar el enfoque de género en las políticas públicas creadas por el estado para garantizar el empoderamiento y la participación en la construcción sociedad más justa, igualitaria y en paz. Que en este momento es nuestra bandera, tal como lo establece nuestra constitución y el resto ordenamiento jurídico en esa materia.

Este es para hablarte poco más del Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Mujer, es bastante importante para mí decirte como algunos planes y lo que ellos trabajan. No te voy a referir todo, pero te voy a referir este algunos.

Está, por ejemplo, el Plan Nacional "Argelia Laya" que tiene que ver con la formación feminista para la igualdad de género y la no discriminación. Tenemos a CAFIM, que es el Centro de Atención de Formación Integral de la Mujer, como ente las políticas públicas en la materia atención primaria para las mujeres víctimas de la violencia. También tenemos los Comités de Mujer e Igualdad de Género.

Tenemos las Defensoras Comunes. Tenemos el Ministerio del Poder Popular también trabaja con la Escuela "Eva Pernaleté." Porque el Ministerio cubre varios aspectos. La Escuela "Eva Pernaleté" es una escuela de formación y producción agrícola para la soberanía alimentaria e igualdad de género.

También tenemos "La Patria es una Mujer" dirigido a la mujer con diagnóstico de cáncer de mama.

De hecho, me lo referiste en la pregunta, otra de los planes es el Plan "Mama Rosa," que fue creado para el periodo 2013-2019 dentro del Plan de la Patria. Específicamente este plan "Mama Rosa" te puedo decir que esta fundamental en



La Unión Nacional de Mujeres se manifiesta por la paz y contra la intervención extranjera. 6 de mayo, 2017.

la revisión de la inclusión y la participación política de las mujeres, para despatriarcar los cargos del alto nivel de decisión y las candidaturas de la elección popular. Eso forme parte de esos fundamentos. Todo esto con el fin de incluir y empoderar a las mujeres también en este frente de lucha que es de la política.

Todo esto, por supuesto, se da en el marco del legado que nos dejó el presidente Chávez. En el momento a la creación del Plan "Mama Rosa" fue un momento emotivo para nosotros los venezolanos porque el presidente se muera el 2013. Precisamente cuando se establece el Plan "Mama Rosa" se crearon unos planes, se creó una estrategia para la continuidad a ese carácter feminista que siempre mostró el presidente Chávez. De hecho, en octubre si mal no recuerdo, en una asamblea de mujeres, en el 2010 el presidente se declaró públicamente feminista.

Es muy importante, el Plan "Mama Rosa" porque en manos hasta el momento en el presidente Nicolás Maduro le han dado continuidad al carácter feminista que debe estar presente en el proceso revolucionario actual.

FTT: La recién elegida Asamblea Nacional Constituyente está dirigida por Delcy Rodríguez, y también cuenta con un alto número de mujeres representantes electas, ¿puede decirnos qué porcentaje de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente son mujeres y qué papel desempeñan para avanzar en los objetivos de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente?

Sra. Vizcaya: Que una mujer sea la que preside la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente marca la pauta de la continuidad del legado presidente Chávez. Por su puesto, de manos de esta continuidad de viene, la sigue en este caso, en nuestro presidente Nicolás Maduro. Siempre el presidente Nicolás Maduro ha hecho hincapié en el carácter feminista que debe permanecer en la revolución bolivariana.

Recuerdo que en las primeras sesiones del Asamblea Nacional Constituyente fueron dedicadas a la mujer y a la igualdad de género ya que también veníamos de todo este proceso que vivimos para la elección de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente donde muchísimas mujeres fuimos atropelladas y amedrentadas por el tema de la violencia de la oposición para esos días.

Este te cuento que el 30% de los diputados electos en la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente son mujeres, son mujeres indígenas, mujeres trabajadoras, mujeres jóvenes, mujeres de la tercera edad. Todas

están participando en las 21 comisiones de la Asamblea. De las 21 comisiones que conforman la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente está la comisión de la mujer y la equidad de género.

Dentro del carácter revolucionario de este proceso, uno de sus fundamentos debe por todo lo que presidente Chávez nos dijo en vida, debe permanecer el carácter feminista de la revolución.

En la actualidad, la participación política de la mujer en Venezuela para mí es de vanguardia. Nosotras estamos en la vanguardia de la lucha política feminista.

FTT: Desde la elección del Comandante Chávez y el comienzo del proceso revolucionario bolivariano en 1998, ¿qué diría usted que son los logros que se han establecido por los derechos de las mujeres en Venezuela?

Sra. Vizcaya: Lo primera que me gustaría a resultar es que nuestra constitución vigente marco un hito, porque es la primera carta magna con lenguaje de género. Lo siguiente es la creación del Banco de Desarrollo de la Mujer en 2001, la creación de la ley orgánica sobre el derecho de las mujeres a una vida libre de la violencia que tipifica 19 tipos de violencia contra la mujer y establece mecanismos de defensa, acción y protección para la mujer. También tenemos la creación en 2009 del Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Mujer y la Igualdad de Género.

Para mí, estos son grandes logros en el proceso revolucionario. Nunca antes de 1998, nunca la mujer tuvo un papel tan importante, y nunca fue tan defendida como lo ha sido y es gracias al proceso revolucionario y gracias al carácter feminista del presidente Chávez y la continuidad que le ha dado el presidente Maduro a todos a las políticas de protección de la mujer.

Como decía presidente Chávez "Venezuela tiene nombre de una mujer." De hecho por lo menos para mí ningún otro líder como el presidente Chávez se ha atrevido a decir públicamente que era feminista. Por eso el presidente marco la diferencia y a partir de allí seguimos con el apoyo a este objetivo gracias al presidente Nicolás Maduro.

FTT: Venezuela enfrenta ataques y sabotajes del gobierno de los EE. UU. y sus aliados imperialistas, que intentan bloquear el avance del proceso revolucionario bolivariano. Dentro de esto, ¿cuáles crees que son los principales desafíos para las mujeres que responden a estos ataques y promueven el proceso revolucionario bolivariano en Venezuela hoy en día?

Sra. Vizcaya: El presidente Chávez dijo ante el mundo que se declaraba socialista y feminista y le dio un papel protagónico a la mujer en las políticas públicas en nuestro país. Recuerdo que uno de sus mensajes por el Día Internacional de la Mujer presidente dijo, "La mujer es vital en la construcción de la patria socialista. Sigamos asumiendo el papel de la vanguardia, y salvamos a la patria con su amor, pasión, inteligencia y agudeza."

Fíjate, nosotras como mujeres debemos seguir en el frente de lucha. Debemos seguir en el frente de la lucha política, debemos seguir en el frente de la lucha de organización. Nosotras debemos de seguir luchando para nosotras se incluya en todos los aspectos. En todos los aspectos económicos industriales. Para que nosotras podamos concretar junto con la revolución la defensa en la patria. Nosotras, como mujeres, debemos seguir, y debemos estimular a la organización de la sociedad. Precisamente porque somos una sociedad donde las mujeres somos mayoría. Tememos que seguir organizándonos, tenemos que seguir luchando, y tenemos que seguir defendiendo el proceso revolucionario en organización y en paz.

FTT: ¿Hay algo más que quiere a decir?

Sra. Vizcaya: Venezuela en este momento se enfrenta a un mundo desigual y hay la importancia histórica de todo está ocurriendo en nuestro país. Por eso pues que la lucha sigue.

FTT: Muchísimas gracias.



Participantes en "Martes de Mujer" - una vitrina que incentiva a mostrar proyectos productivos, para expresar el protagonismo de las venezolanas. Junio 22, 2016.

Iran's first women's march on International Women's Day, March 8, 1979, one month after millions of Iranian people overthrew the monarchy. The partially seen banner reads "Equal Rights for Women" and partially seen sign reads "We Demand Compulsory Education for Women." Photo credit: Ali Yerevani 1979



What do driverless ore-hauling trucks and BC wine have to do with each other? More than you might think when it comes to the Alberta NDP Premier Rachel Notley's claims that she is leading the fight to "Keep Canada Working" by trying to force through the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion and increase Alberta Tar Sands production.

Things escalated recently when the BC NDP provincial government announced it would limit the increase of diluted bitumen transportation through the province until an independent scientific advisory panel could make recommendations on if or how heavy oils can be safely transported and, if spilled, cleaned up. Soon after Premier Notley announced a strange and provocative ban on BC wine entering Alberta. That trade had totalled 70 million dollars in 2017.

Dirty Secret

Bitumen is the kind of crude oil found in the Alberta Tar Sands. It's the heaviest crude oil used today – too heavy to be transported through pipelines. It must be diluted with chemicals for this to happen. In the case of an Enbridge's 2010 pipeline spill in Michigan's Kalamazoo River, these chemicals quickly evaporated leaving the bitumen to sink to the bottom of the river and create a clean-up nightmare. Commonly known as "The Dilbit Disaster", it took years to even re-open the river and cost over 1.2 billion dollars to clean.

If Kinder's Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline expansion is built, it would more than double the pipeline's capacity, from 300,000 barrels of dilbit per day to 890,000. It would also increase tanker traffic seven-fold, from five to 34 a month in the Vancouver Harbour area. With no proven way to really manage a dilbit oil spill, you can see why the Alberta government and Kinder Morgan are so concerned about a scientific review. They know the answer would be negative.

Oil and Wine

The ensuing battle dominated news headlines across Canada – and showed again how dynamic this issue is. Immediately a grassroots campaign to buy BC wine with widely used hashtags like, "#PinoitNotPipelines" and "#ToastTheCoast" spread in BC and across Canada. Notley looked petty and reactive, and tried to counter with

KINDER MORGAN & THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

ALL OUT MARCH 10!



an online petition to "Keep Canada Working" by building the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

In the end the dispute ended with whimper, not a bang. Notley dropped the wine ban while BC NDP Premier John Horgan announced he would not move ahead with reviewing limits on diluted bitumen shipments until he got court approval.

Missed Opportunity

Horgan's decision to back down was disappointing for many. While the campaign to drink more BC wine wasn't particularly radical, the immediate and broad response shows how energized opposition to the pipeline is. A recent survey found that 10 percent of BC residents are willing to engage in civil disobedience to stop its construction – that's over 400,000 people. Even right-wing pundits like Margeret Wente are writing columns in the *Globe and Mail* titled, "The Trans Mountain pipeline will never be built." Her reasoning? "Because despite the approval of the National Energy Board 15 months ago, opposition to the pipeline has only grown." Popular investment analysis site Seeking Alpha just published a new report titled which summarize that, "the tension between B.C. and Alberta has only intensified and the fate of Trans Mountain has been thrown into turmoil as there is no end in sight for the current deadlock."

So it doesn't make sense for the BC NDP to step back when there's every indication that they have support for their position, and a clear advantage in the dispute.

This comes at a time when there's no room to waver. Kinder Morgan CEO Ian Anderson recently reaffirmed, "We are not close to pulling the pin. We are focused on creating the environment and the certainty that we need." Their first order of pipe has already arrived at Kinder Morgan's facilities in Alberta and they will spend 1.5 million on the pipeline this year.

They Don't Care About Us

So where do these driverless ore-hauling trucks come into the picture? Oil giant Suncor is buying 400 of them in a bid to cut Tar Sands workers. It was also big oil companies in Alberta who demanded and got changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program in 2006 – allowing them to fast track hiring of vulnerable and cheaper workers from overseas – and use them to replace and to drive wages down for everyone in Alberta.

In October 2013, Fort McMurray Today

reported that 270 oil workers were laid off from Husky Energy's Sunrise project. Temporary foreign workers were then brought in to do the job. The Financial Post also reported that another 65 ironworkers at Imperial Oil's Kearl oilsands mine in Alberta were laid off and replaced by temporary foreign workers.

We do not condemn temporary foreign workers – who come from desperate situations to try and earn a living for their families. Rather – we need to remember that big oil corporations don't care about the planet and they certainly don't care about people either. They drive down wages and get rid of workers every chance they get.

In a more broader view – the Tar Sands are a limited resource which is massively and unnecessarily contributing to a growing climate crisis. It is absurd to breath new life into a dying industry which is trying to drag the planet down with it. The possibilities for renewable energy – and of course all the jobs associated with building this growing sector – are massive.

We Must Lead

So will Rachel Notley really “Keep

Canada Working” by bowing to big oil companies? Not a snowball's chance in hell (or on earth if we continue to allow global warming to overtake the planet). We are also seeing time and time again that we need to rely on an independent climate justice movement to lead the fight against the Kinder Morgan pipeline. The current BC NDP provincial government might help buy us some time to organize, but they haven't shown themselves to be ready, willing or able to lead the fight.

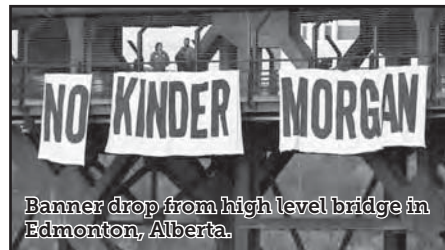
Fortunately, as even the right-wing understand, opposition is growing. On March 10, there is an indigenous led mass mobilization happening in Burnaby, where Kinder Morgan is currently expanding its Marine Terminal for the pipeline. This mobilization promises to be the start or more sustained actions, and already almost 5000 people have committed to participating. This is the kind of leadership we need, and this is who is really defending the future.

Kinder Morgan, We Still Say No! All Out for March 10

*Follow Thomas Davies on Twitter:
@thomasdavies9*



Workers trying to clean massive dilbit pipeline spill in the Kalamazoo River.



Banner drop from high level bridge in Edmonton, Alberta.



Suncor driverless vehicles to replace workers in Tar Sands projects.

TD - TOTALLY DIVEST FROM KINDER MORGAN!



By Thomas Davies

With the Kinder Morgan pipeline continuing to be a hot button issue across Canada, the Climate Convergence coalition in Vancouver continued its monthly campaign calling on the TD Bank to divest the \$731 million dollars it has committed to the controversial project. The monthly actions in front of different TD Bank branch locations have

a growing number of regular participants and continue to attract new people and lots of honks and support from the general public.

This month protestors unveiled a large new hand-painted banner which read, “TD – Totally Divest from Kinder Morgan!” in huge white letters. There was also a new informational leaflet about the proposed Kinder Morgan pipeline and TD's support for the project despite a public corporate policy supposedly championing sustainability and protection of the environment. Once again the entire block in front of the bank was taken up by banners and signs, and everyone entering the bank was offered information about the campaign.

Climate Convergence has many plans to continue growing these actions. Several towns and cities outside of the Lower Mainland have asked for assistance in organizing demonstrations in front of their local TD Banks, and next month will involve a day of coordinated actions at every TD Bank in the city of Burnaby, where the proposed

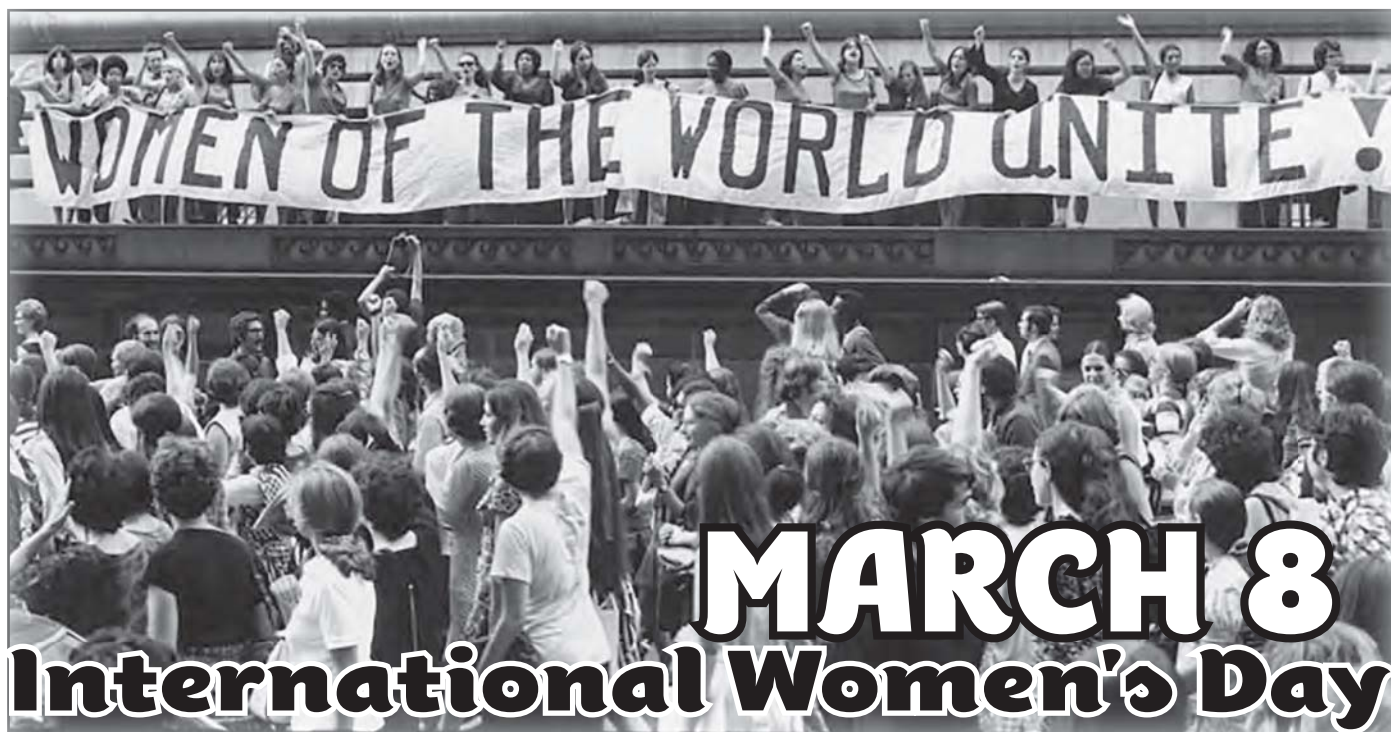
Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion would terminate.

There continues to be many different actions across BC opposing the Kinder Morgan pipeline – many of which have been become consistent campaigns which allow them to grow and be effective. The “TD – Totally Divest from Kinder Morgan!” campaign is part of this growing force which is also building towards the March 10 indigenous-led mass mobilization on Burnaby Mountain.

Kinder Morgan, We Still Say No!

TD – Totally Divest from Kinder Morgan!





A great talk by Bolshevik leader Alexandra Kollontai, given in 1920

Women's Day or Working Women's Day is a day of international solidarity, and a day for reviewing the strength and organization of proletarian women.

But this is not a special day for women alone. The 8th of March is a historic and memorable day for the workers and peasants, for all the Russian workers and for the workers of the whole world. In 1917, on this day, the great February revolution broke out. It was the working women of Petersburg who began this revolution; it was they who first decided to raise the banner of opposition to the Tsar and his associates. And so, working women's day is a double celebration for us.

But if this is a general holiday for all the proletariat, why do we call it "Women's Day"? Why then do we hold special celebrations and meetings aimed above all at the women workers and the peasant women? Doesn't this jeopardize the unity and solidarity of the working class? To answer these questions, we have to look back and see how Women's Day came about and for what purpose it was organized.

How and Why was Women's Day Organised?

Not very long ago, in fact about ten years ago, the question of women's equality, and the question of whether women could take part in government alongside men was being hotly debated. The working class in all capitalist countries struggled for the rights of working women: the bourgeoisie did not want to accept these rights. It was not in the interest of the bourgeoisie to strengthen the vote of the working class in parliament; and in every

country they hindered the passing of laws that gave the right to working women.

Socialists in North America insisted upon their demands for the vote with particular persistence. On the 28th of February, 1909, the women socialists of the U.S.A. organized huge demonstrations and meetings all over the country demanding political rights for working women. This was the first "Woman's Day". The initiative on organizing a woman's day thus belongs to the working women of America.

In 1910, at the Second International Conference of Working Women, Clara Zetkin brought forward the question of organizing an International Working Women's Day. The conference decided that every year, in every country, they should celebrate on the same day a "Women's Day" under the slogan "The vote for women will unite our strength in the struggle for socialism".

During these years, the question of making parliament more democratic, i.e., of widening the franchise and extending the vote to women, was a vital issue. Even before the first world war, the workers had the right to vote in all bourgeois countries except Russia. Only women, along with the insane, remained without these rights. Yet, at the same time, the harsh reality of capitalism demanded the participation of women in the country's economy. Every year there was an increase in the number of women who had to work in the factories and workshops, or as servants and charwomen. Women worked alongside men and the wealth of the country was created by their hands. But women remained without the vote.

But in the last years before the war the rise in prices forced even the most peaceful housewife

to take an interest in questions of politics and to protest loudly against the bourgeoisie's economy of plunder. "Housewives uprisings" became increasingly frequent, flaring up at different times in Austria, England, France and Germany.

The working women understood that it wasn't enough to break up the stalls at the market or threaten the odd merchant: They understood that such action doesn't bring down the cost of living. You have to change the politics of the government. And to achieve this, the working class has to see that the franchise is widened.

It was decided to have a Woman's Day in every country as a form of struggle in getting working women to vote. This day was to be a day of international solidarity in the fight for common objectives and a day for reviewing the organized strength of working women under the banner of socialism.

The First International Women's Day

The decision taken at the Second International Congress of Socialist Women was not left on paper. It was decided to hold the first International Women's Day on the 19th of March, 1911.

This date was not chosen at random. Our German comrades picked the day because of its historic importance for the German proletariat. On the 19th of March in the year of 1848 revolution, the Prussian king recognized for the first time the strength of the armed people and gave way before the threat of a proletarian uprising. Among the many promise he made, which he later failed to keep, was the introduction of votes for women.

After January 11, efforts were made in Germany and Austria to prepare for Women's Day. They

made known the plans for a demonstration both by word of mouth and in the press. During the week before Women's Day two journals appeared: *The Vote for Women* in Germany and *Women's Day* in Austria. The various articles devoted to Women's Day – "Women and Parliament," "The Working Women and Municipal Affairs," "What Has the Housewife got to do with Politics?," etc. – analyzed thoroughly the question of the equality of women in the government and in society. All the articles emphasized the same point: that it was absolutely necessary to make parliament more democratic by extending the franchise to women.

The first International Women's Day took place in 1911. Its success succeeded all expectation. Germany and Austria on Working Women's Day was one seething, trembling sea of women. Meetings were organized everywhere – in the small towns and even in the villages halls were packed so full that they had to ask male workers to give up their places for the women.

This was certainly the first show of militancy by the working woman. Men stayed at home with their children for a change, and their wives, the captive housewives, went to meetings. During the largest street demonstrations, in which 30,000 were taking part, the police decided to remove the demonstrators' banners: the women workers made a stand. In the scuffle that followed, bloodshed was averted only with the help of the socialist deputies in Parliament.

In 1913 International Women's Day was transferred to the 8th of March. This day has remained the working women's day of militancy.

Is Women's Day Necessary?

Women's Day in America and Europe had amazing results. It's true that not a single bourgeois parliament thought of making concessions to the workers or of responding to the women's demands. For at that time, the bourgeoisie was not threatened by a socialist revolution.

But Women's Day did achieve something. It turned out above all to be an excellent method of agitation among the less political of our proletarian sisters. They could not help but turn their attention to the meetings, demonstrations, posters, pamphlets and newspapers that were devoted to Women's Day. Even the politically backward working

woman thought to herself: "This is our day, the festival for working women," and she hurried to the meetings and demonstrations. After each Working Women's Day, more women joined the socialist parties and the trade unions grew. Organizations improved and political consciousness developed.

Women's Day served yet another function; it strengthened the international solidarity of the workers. The parties in different countries usually exchange speakers for this occasion: German comrades go to England, English comrades go to Holland, etc. The international cohesion of the working class has become strong and firm and this means that the fighting strength of the proletariat as a whole has grown.

These are the results of working women's day of militancy. The day of working women's militancy helps increase the consciousness and organization of proletarian women. And this means that its contribution is essential to the success of those fighting for a better future for the working class.

Women Workers Day During the Imperialist War

The first world war broke out. The working class in every country was covered with the blood of war. In 1915 and 1916 "Working Women's Day" abroad was a feeble affair – left wing socialist women who shared the views of the Russian Bolshevik Party tried to turn March 8th into a demonstration of working women against the war. But those socialist party traitors in Germany and other countries would not allow the socialist women to organize gatherings; and the socialist women were refused passports to go to neutral countries where the working women wanted to hold International meetings and show that in spite of the desire of the bourgeoisie, the spirit of International solidarity lived on.

In 1915, it was only in Norway that they managed to organize an international demonstration on Women's Day; representatives from Russia and neutral countries attended. There could be no thought of organizing a Women's Day in Russia, for here the power of Tsarism and the military machine was unbridled.

Then came the great, great year of 1917. Hunger, cold and trials of war broke the patience of the women workers and the peasant women of Russia. In 1917, on the



8th of March (23rd of February), on Working Women's Day, they came out boldly in the streets of Petrograd. The women – some were workers, some were wives of soldiers – demanded "Bread for our children" and "The return of our husbands from the trenches." At this decisive time the protests of the working women posed such a threat that even the Tsarist security forces did not dare take the usual measures against the rebels but looked on in confusion at the stormy sea of the people's anger.

The 1917 Working Women's Day has become memorable in history. On this day the Russian women raised the torch of proletarian revolution and set the world on fire. The February revolution marks its beginning from this day.

Our Call To Battle

"Working Women's Day" was first organized ten years ago in the campaign for the political equality of women and the struggle for socialism. This aim has been achieved by the working class women in Russia. In the soviet republic the working women and peasants don't need to fight for the franchise and for civil rights. They have already won these rights. The Russian workers and the peasant women are equal citizens – in their hands is a powerful weapon to make the struggle for a better life easier – the right to vote, to take part in the Soviets and in all collective organizations.

But rights alone are not enough. We have to learn to make use of them. The right to vote is a weapon which we have to learn to master for our own benefit, and for the good of the workers' republic. In the two years of Soviet Power, life itself has not been absolutely changed. We are only in the process of struggling for communism and we are surrounded by the world we have inherited from the dark and repressive past. The shackles of the family, of housework, of prostitution still weigh heavily on the working woman. Working women and peasant women can only rid themselves of this situation and achieve equality in life itself, and not just in

Working Women's Day protests in St. Petersburg mark the beginning of the February Revolution, March 8, 1917.



continues on page 29

Cuba is responding

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Statement on Venezuela

STATEMENT *MinRex*

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Republic of Cuba

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Cuba rejects interference and exclusion of Venezuela from Summit of the Americas

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba energetically rejects the announcement by a group of nations in the hemisphere, released February 13 in Lima, that constitutes unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and at the same time categorically rejects the decision to reconsider the participation of the Venezuelan government in the 8th Summit of the Americas, to be held this coming month of April, in Peru.

A few days ago, the U.S. Secretary of State, on a tour of several countries in the region, stated that continuing in effect is the Monroe Doctrine, the most notorious interventionist policy of U.S. imperialism in our region. He called for a military coup against the constitutional government of Venezuela and advocated strengthening sanctions on the country. The decision adopted is not unrelated to these declarations and actions.

In this context, Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalls the arbitrary and aggressive U.S. Executive Order, renewed in January of 2017, that describes Venezuela as "an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security

and foreign policy" of the superpower, and President Donald Trump's most recent warning about utilizing "a possible military option, if necessary."

It is unprecedented and incredible that now being used as a pretext is an alleged "unconstitutional rupture of the democratic order," precisely in a country which has held, within a few months time, municipal, regional, and Constituent Assembly elections, and has just called Presidential elections, precisely as has been demanded, including via external interference and unconstitutional, violent methods.

Cuba denounces this statement and the exclusion of Venezuela from the Summit of the Americas as contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as

a Zone of Peace, signed by heads of state and government of countries which are members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirms Cuba's unwavering solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the military-civic union of its people, led by constitutional President Nicolás Maduro Moros.

Absolutely relevant are the words of Raúl Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and Ministers, on July 14, 2017, when he said, "Aggression and coup violence against Venezuela hurt all of Our America and only benefit the interests of those who attempt to divide us, in order to assert their dominance over our peoples, regardless of the incalculable consequences for the region, like those we are witnessing in different parts of the world. We warn those who today attempt to overthrow the Bolivarian Chavista revolution, using unconstitutional, violent, coup-plotting methods, that they are assuming a serious, responsibility before history."

Havana, February 14, 2018



Cubans march in support of Venezuela in Havana, Cuba, August 25, 2017. Banner reads "Venezuela is not alone!"

On February 13, 2018 the Lima Group met in Peru for the 5th time. Once again, the Foreign Minister of Canada, Chrystia Freeland, played a leading role at the meeting in promoting the threats and interventionist rhetoric the meeting propagated against the government of Venezuela.

Outrageously, in addition to repeating unsubstantiated allegations of the violation of various “human rights” and “democratic” norms in Venezuela, the final declaration of this meeting also condemns the decision of the National Electoral Council in Venezuela to hold Presidential elections on April 22. This position is absolutely hypocritical, given the fact that Presidential elections are what the U.S. government and their imperialist allies, including Canada and Lima Group countries, have been demanding of Venezuela all along!

Formed in August, 2017 the Lima Group is made up of Canada and 13 other Latin American right-wing governments, who have aligned to promote foreign intervention in Venezuela with the goal of overthrowing the democratically elected government of President Maduro. The government of Canada is very comfortable within this den of pro-intervention governments, because there are completely in-line with their own foreign policy. Since the election of Hugo Chavez in 1999, the government of Canada has been working with the U.S. government and Venezuela's violent counter-revolutionary

FIRE THIS TIME STATEMENT: CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

opposition to destabilize Venezuela and reverse the gains of the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

Since September, the government of Canada has escalated their campaign of sanctions and threats, imposing cruel and unjustifiable sanctions that target 52 government officials in Venezuela, including President Nicolás Maduro. In December, Canada also stripped the diplomatic credentials from the Venezuelan Ambassador to Canada, Wilmer Barrientos Fernandez and Chargé d'Affaires at the Venezuelan Embassy in Canada, Angel Herrera. Among other meddling, the government of Canada has also continued to give political and financial support to Venezuela's counter-revolutionary opposition, which has been given exclusive meetings with Prime Minister Trudeau and received funding through the Canadian Embassy in Caracas.

The statements and actions of the government of Canada and the Lima Group are in violation of the self-determination and sovereignty of Venezuela. The democratically elected government of President Maduro and the people of Venezuela have the right to call for and organize Presidential elections without the interference of foreign governments.

The Bolivarian revolutionary process has a proven record of open and transparent elections, even receiving recognition from former US President Carter for having an election process that is “the best in the world.” The government of Canada has no right to declare the upcoming Presidential elections “illegitimate” – especially before they have even occurred!

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign condemns the government of Canada for their involvement in the Lima Group. We demand that the government of Canada immediately lift all sanctions against Venezuela, end their meddling in the internal affairs of Venezuela and cease their political and financial support for Venezuela's so-called opposition.

As the governments of the U.S. and Canada ramp up their campaign of threats, sanctions and intervention in Venezuela, we poor, working and oppressed people in Canada and the U.S. must unite to organize in defense of the sovereignty and self-determination of the people of Venezuela.

Vancouver, Canada
February 18, 2018

DECLARACIÓN DE FIRE THIS TIME MOVIMIENTO POR JUSTICIA SOCIAL: CANADA MANOS FUERA DE VENEZUELA!

El 13 de febrero de 2018, el Grupo Lima se reunió en Perú por quinta vez. Una vez más, la Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores de Canadá, Chrystia Freeland, jugó un papel importante en la promoción de las amenazas y la retórica intervencionista propagada por la reunión contra el gobierno de Venezuela.

Atrozmente, además de repetir acusaciones infundadas de la violación de varias normas de “derechos humanos” y “democráticas” en Venezuela, la declaración final de esta reunión también condena la decisión del Consejo Nacional Electoral en Venezuela de celebrar elecciones presidenciales el 22 de abril. ¡Esta posición es absolutamente hipócrita, dado que las elecciones presidenciales son lo que el gobierno de los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas, incluidos los países de Canadá y del Grupo Lima, han estado exigiendo a Venezuela desde el principio!

Formado en agosto de 2017, el Grupo Lima está compuesto por Canadá y otros 13 gobiernos latinoamericanos de derecha, que se han alineado para promover la intervención extranjera en Venezuela con el objetivo de derrocar al gobierno democráticamente elegido del presidente Maduro. El gobierno de Canadá se siente muy cómodo dentro de esta guarida de gobiernos que apoya la intervención, porque están completamente

en línea con su propia política exterior. Desde la elección de Hugo Chávez en 1999, el gobierno de Canadá ha estado trabajando con el gobierno de los EE. UU. y la violenta oposición contrarrevolucionaria para desestabilizar a Venezuela y revertir los logros del proceso revolucionario bolivariano.

Desde septiembre, el gobierno de Canadá ha intensificado su campaña de sanciones y amenazas, imponiendo sanciones crueles e injustificables dirigidas a 52 funcionarios gubernamentales en Venezuela, incluido el presidente Nicolás Maduro. En diciembre, Canadá también despojó las credenciales diplomáticas del embajador venezolano en Canadá, Wilmer Barrientos Fernández y el Encargado de Negocios de la Embajada de Venezuela en Canadá, Ángel Herrera. Entre otras intromisiones, el gobierno de Canadá también ha seguido dando apoyo político y financiero a la oposición contrarrevolucionaria de Venezuela, a la que se han dado reuniones exclusivas con el primer ministro Trudeau y a recibido fondos a través de la Embajada de Canadá en Caracas.

Las declaraciones y acciones del gobierno de Canadá y del Grupo Lima son una violación de la autodeterminación y soberanía de Venezuela. El gobierno democráticamente elegido del presidente Maduro y el pueblo

de Venezuela tienen derecho a convocar y organizar elecciones presidenciales sin la interferencia de gobiernos extranjeros. El proceso revolucionario bolivariano tiene un historial probado de elecciones abiertas y transparentes, incluso recibió el reconocimiento del ex presidente estadounidense Carter por tener un proceso electoral que es “el mejor del mundo”. El gobierno de Canadá no tiene derecho a declarar las próximas elecciones presidenciales “ilegítimas”—¡especialmente antes de que hayan ocurrido!

La Campaña de Fire This Time Movimiento por la Justicia Social en Solidaridad con Venezuela condena al gobierno de Canadá por su participación en el Grupo Lima. Exigimos que el gobierno de Canadá levante inmediatamente todas las sanciones contra Venezuela, termine su intromisión en los asuntos internos de Venezuela y cese su apoyo político y financiero a la violenta oposición de Venezuela.

A medida que los gobiernos de los EE. UU. y Canadá intensifiquen su campaña de amenazas, sanciones e intervención en Venezuela, nosotros, los pobres, trabajadores y oprimidos en Canadá y los Estados Unidos debemos unirnos para organizarnos en defensa de la soberanía y la autodeterminación del pueblo de Venezuela.

Vancouver, Canadá
18 de febrero de 2018

VANCOUVER JOINS GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION DEMANDING "U.S. RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA NOW!"

By Janine Solanki

On January 30th, 2018, U.S. President Trump signed an executive order to keep Guantanamo Bay prison open. The notorious prison, where the U.S. arbitrarily detains and tortures people, denying them of legal and human rights, has held close to 800 people under the guise of the U.S. so-called "war on terror". The executive order signed by Trump is in line with statements that he made as a presidential candidate regarding Guantanamo Bay prison, that he would "load it up with some bad dudes".

Not only is the U.S. continuing to keep this horrific prison open, they are also continuing to occupy the Cuban territory of Guantanamo Bay. February 23 marked the 115th anniversary of the U.S. seizure of Guantanamo Bay from the Cuban people. The Cuban government and people have been demanding the return of Guantanamo for decades, a demand that the U.S. government has refused to meet.



Marking the anniversary of the U.S. seizure of Guantanamo Bay, on February 23 a Global Day of Action was called by the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases. This day of action demanded the U.S. return Guantanamo to Cuba, and that the U.S. close all foreign military bases. The U.S. has over 800 foreign military bases around the world, headquarters for the brutal and destructive new era of war and occupation.

In Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held their monthly antiwar rally and petition campaign as part of this Global Day of Action. On a very snowy February 23, activists and peace-loving people gathered in downtown Vancouver, holding up picket signs and a banner demanding "Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" and "Close All U.S. Foreign Military Bases!" Alongside these slogans, protesters

also held a banner demanding "U.S./Saudi Arabia Hands Off Yemen!" calling attention to the almost three year of the U.S.-backed Saudi-led war and bombing of Yemen. In addition to the destruction caused by the war, Saudi Arabia has also imposed a land, sea and air blockade of Yemen, causing an extreme humanitarian crisis as well as the worst cholera outbreak on record.

Despite the heavy snow, people walking by visited the information table and stopped to find out about the protest, sign antiwar petitions and get antiwar literature. Alison Bodine, the chair of MAWO, also spoke to the crowd and passersby about the demands of the rally and read the statement from the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases. The statement, and the listing of other cities also part of this Global Day of Action can be found at <http://noforeignbases.org>.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation has been holding monthly antiwar rallies and petition drives in Vancouver for the past 14 years. MAWO will continue to do so demanding an end to this new era of war and occupation. To find out more about MAWO's events and actions visit www.mawovancouver.org or find MAWO on Facebook and Twitter @MAWOVan

On February 9, the FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign organized a picket action in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. The monthly action heard from local speakers in between rounds of picketing, with energetic chanting and picket signs demanding "No Regime Change in Venezuela" and "USA Hands Off Venezuela!" Following the picket action, the protest moved up to the busy Vancouver Art Gallery plaza in downtown Vancouver, where activists set up an information table which attracted people passing by to come and get more information and talk to organizers about what is happening in Venezuela. Activists also set out in teams to ask passersby to sign on to a petition against Canada's threats and sanctions against Venezuela. The parliamentary petition is being circulated across Canada, and after it reaches 500 signatures will be discussed within Canada's parliament.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign will continue organizing these actions in defense of the sovereignty and self-determination of the people of Venezuela every month. To find out about the next action visit www.firethistime.net or follow Fire This Time on Facebook or Twitter @FTT_np



VANCOUVERITES DEMAND: US/CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

By Janine Solanki

During February 2017, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited five right-wing governments in Latin America, including Colombia and Brazil, which border Venezuela. Tillerson's only objective was to promote the imperialist campaign of "regime change" in Venezuela. The U.S. government wants nothing less than the overthrow of the democratically elected

President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, and the reversal of every gain made by the Bolivarian Revolution.

This gross disrespect for the right of the people of Venezuela to determine their own government is further expressed by the fact that the governments of the United States and Canada have declared that they will not recognize the results of the upcoming Presidential elections in Venezuela, which are scheduled to take place on April 22, 2018. This is unbelievably hypocritical, given the fact that Presidential elections are what the U.S. government and their imperialist allies have been demanding of Venezuela all along!

As the governments of the U.S. and Canada ramp up their campaign of threats, sanctions and intervention in Venezuela, here in Vancouver, Canada the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is organizing monthly actions demanding U.S./Canada hands off Venezuela!

Cuban Film and Cultural Night Reflects Love and Revolution with the Classic Film "Clandestinos"

By Janine Solanki

If you have been experiencing the cold in Vancouver this February, you may have wished you were enjoying the warmth of Cuba! Cuba is one of the top travel destinations for people in Canada, with over 1 million tourists every year. Beyond Cuba's beautiful beaches and tropical temperatures, visitors to Cuba get a glimpse of the Cuban revolution in daily life. This could be noticing that Cuban children are receiving a quality universal education, that Cuban people have a renowned free healthcare system keeping them healthy, and that Cuban people

are engaged and active in the political process of their country from within their communities and organizations. Many people come back from Cuba curious to know more about the country, and Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) film and cultural nights are great opportunity for people to learn about Cuba here in Vancouver!

On February 18, just a few days after Valentines Day, VCSC organized a Cuban film and cultural night featuring the classic Cuban film "Clandestinos". The event, held at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House in Vancouver, started out with attendees enjoying delicious Cuban caldosa soup and croquettes. Tamara Hansen, coordinator of VCSC, then introduced musicians Beto and Terrel who treated the audience to beautiful original music on the flute and guitar, reflecting the struggles for justice across Latin America. Following the live music

was the Cuban film "Clandestinos" which is about the romance between two young revolutionaries in the urban underground, fighting against the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista. The film captures both the humor and sweetness of love, and the sacrifices made by Cuban revolutionaries in the fight against the brutal Batista dictatorship. The classic 1987 film also highlights the important and heroic role women had in the Cuban revolution.

The event wrapped up with announcements for upcoming events in solidarity with Cuba, including a cultural evening celebrating International Women's Day and the revolutionary women of Cuba and Venezuela. For information on Cuba solidarity actions and events in Vancouver visit www.vancubasolidarity.com or follow Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba on Facebook and Twitter @VanCuba_VCSC

Vancouver, Ottawa, Montreal and Kiev Cuba supporters out on the streets demand an end to the US Blockade on Cuba!



By Janine Solanki

February 7, 2018, marked 56 years since U.S. President Kennedy issued an executive order that imposed the cruel and illegal U.S. blockade against Cuba. More recently, on January 30, 2018 U.S. President Trump signed an executive order to keep the Guantánamo torture prison camp open, thus continuing the United States 115 year-long illegal occupation of Guantánamo Bay.

Both of these executive orders are part of the continuing vicious hostility and aggression of the United States government against Cuba. The blockade affects all aspects of life in Cuba, putting enormous strain on the Cuban economy and making many import goods difficult to obtain. Looking at the field of healthcare alone, the cost of the blockade amounted to more than 87 million dollars between

April 2016 to April 2017 as detailed in the 2017 Cuban report to the United Nations General Assembly. This report gave several examples of instances in which access to medicines or medical supplies were limited due to the U.S. blockade, such as a German company being unable to supply lower limb prosthetics to Cuba for amputee patients, a Spanish company unable to supply a type of antibiotic to Cuba, and a German company refused to supply equipment used in the diagnosis of prostate cancer. These few examples show that the U.S. blockade reaches far beyond trade between the U.S. and Cuba, but to many other countries also! Despite the severe limitations imposed by the blockade, Cuba still provides free healthcare to its people and has health indicators that surpass many "advanced" countries, such as an infant mortality rate of 4.1 per 1,000 live births in 2017, which is much better than the U.S.!

According to Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, who presented the resolution against the U.S. blockade at the United Nations General Assembly in November 2017, "There is not a Cuban family or social service that has not suffered the deprivations resulting from the blockade."

In Vancouver, Canada, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee – Vancouver (FCAB-Van) is standing in defense of Cuba against the U.S. blockade, by holding monthly picket actions in front of the U.S. Consulate in Downtown Vancouver. Alongside Vancouver's monthly actions, coordinated actions are held in Montreal, Ottawa and Kiev, Ukraine also on the 17th of every



month.

On February 17, FCAB-Van gathered Cuba solidarity activists and supporters for the monthly action, raising voices and picket signs to demand "Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba!" In between rounds of picketing in front of the U.S. Consulate, activists gathered and heard from local speakers as well as a solidarity greeting via phone message from Ottawa-Cuba Connections, who were also out in protest in front of the U.S. embassy.

Friends of Cuba in Vancouver and around the world have an important role in joining the Cuban people in demanding the immediate return of Guantánamo Bay to Cuba and an end to the illegal U.S. blockade on their country. Vancouver along with Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine are uniting voices for an end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba, will continue to do so until there is a full normalization of U.S./Cuba relations! Find out about upcoming events against the U.S. blockade on Cuba at <http://www.vancubavsblockade.org> or find Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

Working Group to Repeal Bill C-51 Marks Three Years of Consistent Actions!



By Max Tennant

On Monday February 26th, the Working Group to Repeal Bill C-51 marked three years of weekly actions to repeal this anti-democratic and unjust bill that attacks our fundamental human rights. The 156th Weekly Action was an informational picket at Broadway and Commercial Station, the busiest transit hub in Vancouver and the same location where the first action happened three years ago. In the last three years, the Working Group has worked with various unions, the BC Civil Liberties Association, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, and other local and national organizations to organize successful conferences, public forums, national days of actions, banner drops and weekly picket actions. The campaign continues to educate and organize people not only in BC but across Canada.

The day after the action, Canadian Minister of Finance Bill Morneau released the details of the Government's 2018 Federal Budget. This budget included \$500 million over five years for their so-called new "cyber security plan" which contains \$155.2 million for the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), plus an extra \$222.5 million for the CSE to develop a Canadian Centre for Cyber Security. The RCMP will also receive \$116 million to establish a National Cybercrime Coordination Unit.

The \$500 million is important for the Liberal Government as they begin their increased push to pass Bill C-59, a law that provides even more far reaching powers to the CSE, the Canadian Cyber Spy Intelligence agency, than even the Harper Conservatives did with Bill C-51. This is especially concerning because the CSE acted in secret for decades and its existing powers are already not clearly defined.

History Tells a Different Story

A recent book titled "Policing Indigenous Movements" exposes how different

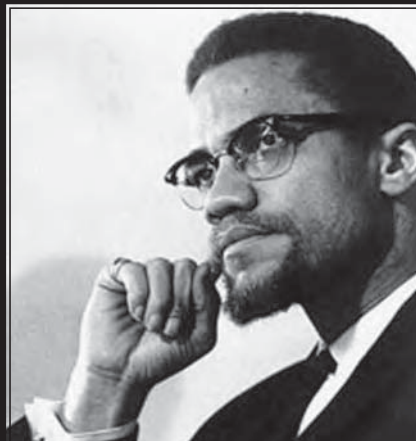
Canadian Intelligence agencies and police forces coordinated their activities in 2013 to suppress Idle No More, an indigenous rights movement which quickly spread across Canada and the U.S. As one of the book's authors Jefferey Monaghan told CBC News, "They were so petrified about another form of cross-country mobilization and solidarity that they were trying to get ahead of that possibility. What it really has to do with is economics: they do not want threats to the various extractive industries." The book also exposes how the RCMP coordinated with various different corporations to suppress Indigenous resistance. If the RCMP and Canadian spy agencies were able to do this in 2013, what do we expect they can do now with Bill C-51 and its possible successor Bill C-59?

Currently many different indigenous nations and organizations are at the forefront in the struggle against the Kinder Morgan pipeline in British Columbia. Given this recent evidence, we can be sure the government and police forces will use every possible means to suppress justified protest and protect corporate interests. Meanwhile both the Conservative and Liberal governments tried to justify new restrictions on our rights as necessary to protect us from "violent Islamic extremists". It sure looks like these restrictions are intended for something else completely!

History and current events demonstrate that these laws are not intended to protect our security but instead intended to suppress legitimate organizing by poor and working people. If we do not fight to defend the rights won by past struggles, we will lose them. If we do not organize for a better future, we will not have one. Three years after its first action, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 remains committed to this ongoing struggle.

**Repeal Bill C-51!
Scrap Bill C-59!**

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

You're not doing the Black man any favor. If you stick a knife in my back, if you put it in nine inches and pull it out six inches, you haven't done me any favor. If you pull it all the way out, you haven't done me any favor. And this is what you have to realize. If you put a man in jail against his will—illegally, he's not guilty—you frame him up, and then because he resents what you've done to him, you put him in solitary confinement to break his spirit, then after his spirit is broken, you let him out a little bit and give him the general run of the prison, you haven't done him any favor. If you let him out of prison completely, you haven't done him any favor, because you put him in there unjustly and illegally in the first place.

Now you have 20 million Black people in this country who were brought here and put in a political, economic, and mental prison. This was done by Uncle Sam. And today you don't realize what a crime your forefathers have committed. And you think that when you open the door a few cracks, and give this little integration-intoxicated Negro a chance to run around in the prison yard—that's all he's doing—that you're doing him a favor. But as long as he has to look up to someone who doesn't represent him and doesn't speak for him, that person only represents the warden, he doesn't represent some kind of president or mayor or governor or senator or congressman or anything else.

U.S. imperialism stands out for the fabrication of its pretexts for its wars. But this has been done so often that no one who is moderately intelligent or well-informed believes them.

It is not yet known whether the fantastic science fiction story about alleged “sonic attacks” against intelligence personnel accredited as diplomats at the U.S. Embassy in Havana was meant to achieve more than the one goal it accomplished. That is, to terrorize Americans in order to neutralize the attraction that Cuba awakens as a result of more than half a century of media demonization and economic blockade, and still enjoying in contrast a high level of security for its population and visitors.

My hypothesis is that Florida's Republican Senator Marco Rubio, found himself in a situation in which he thought it was OK to fabricate a big lie, one that would benefit the image that needs to be built in line with his plans to become president of the United States.

On September 15, 2017, the AP published a report datelined in Havana about the flooding caused by Hurricane Irma due to sea penetration that affected a part of the building housing the U. S. Embassy in Cuba, located on the Havana's Seafont.

Cartoon of Trump reads “U.S./Cuba relations”



Marco Rubio, U.S. Republican Senator for Florida

FALSE PRETEXTS TO STAND OUT

An official of the U. S. National Security Subcommittee (NSSC), who asked the AP not to be identified, told the agency that a lawsuit was being prepared against the American Technology Corporation (ATC), a manufacturer of LRAD-RX equipment used by the NSSC to communicate with its agents in Cuba.

The suit would be based on the auditory impairment that the equipment would have caused to several NSSC workers, their employees and family members. According to the plaintiff, the equipment in question was purchased less than a year earlier and the ATC experts who trained those who would use it, at no time warned them against hearing problems.

According to the source, the suit to be filed by the NSSC included financial compensation for damages caused to operators of the equipment and their affected family members, as well as for damages suffered by the NSSC.

The NSSC immediately ordered the discontinuation of the use of the LRAD-RX but this implied an immediate change in the media with its agents, which led to higher expenses that exceeded the budgeted amount.

The penetration of the sea into the Embassy due to the hurricane complicated the investigation of the technological aspects of the case, because a part

of the equipment was under the sea waters. Although a number of technicians and specialists had planned to travel to Cuba to verify the conditions of the equipment, this aspect of the investigation was already useless. Such are the precedents that the U. S. party omits in its story about the alleged sonic attacks.

Surprisingly, in May 2017, the U. S. State Department ordered the expulsion of two Cuban diplomats in response to “incidents” at their embassy in Cuba without specifying which ones, or whom they considered guilty.

According to Internet search engines, the ATC is a company with U. S. commercial registration, but it is also an entity created by the security forces of the state of Israel. From the same source it is known that LRAD is a weapon that emits a sound that makes the opponent temporarily deaf.

However, when suspicions seemed to concentrate on technological problems attributable to the supplier, scandalous statements by U. S. Senator Marco Rubio “asking for blood against Cuba”. This showed the Florida Republican to be an axis of manipulation that led to the withdrawal of 60% of the workers of the Embassy in Cuba and the expulsion of fifteen diplomats from the Cuban mission in Washington, claiming the “lack of adequate Cuban measures to protect our diplomats”.

Observers of U. S. policy argue that Senator Marco Rubio, who is not Cuban and has never been on the island nation, has been determined for some time to become the first Hispanic president of the United States. Hence, his obsession with excelling in the press, and his involvement with the controversial figure of Donald Trump, whose political premise is to allow only “people less intelligent than him” to work with him.

And Rubio amply meets that requirement.

**Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He is a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.*

Translated and edited by Walter Lippmann.

www.englishmanualeype.wordpress.com

FALSOS PRETEXTOS PARA SOBRESALIR

*** EN ESPAÑOL ***

*Por Manuel Yepe**

El imperialismo estadounidense destaca por la fabricación de pretextos para sus guerras, pero tanto ha reiterado este proceder que ya nadie medianamente inteligente o bien informado le cree.

Aun no se sabe si la fantástica historia de ciencia-ficción acerca de supuestos “ataques sónicos” contra personal de inteligencia acreditado como diplomático en la Embajada de Estados Unidos en La Habana, tenía propósitos mayores que los que ya ha logrado: aterrorizar a los estadounidenses para neutralizar la atracción que despierta Cuba por efecto de más de medio siglo de demonización mediática y bloqueo económico, contrastantes con un elevado nivel de seguridad para su población y sus visitantes.

La hipótesis del comentarista autor de este artículo es que el senador del partido republicano por el estado de Florida Marco Rubio, se percató de una situación que consideró apropiada para fabricar una gran mentira que le reportaría beneficios a los efectos de la imagen que necesita construirse en función de sus planes de lograr para sí la presidencia de Estados Unidos. La agencia Associated Press (AP) había publicado el 15 de septiembre de 2017 una información fechada en La Habana acerca de la inundación ocasionada por el ciclón Irma por la penetración del mar que afectó una parte del edificio de la Embajada de Estados Unidos en Cuba, ubicada en el malecón habanero.

Un funcionario del estadounidense Subcomité Nacional de Seguridad (NSSC, por sus siglas en inglés) que pidió a la AP no ser identificado, le confió a esa agencia

que se preparaba una demanda contra la American Technology Corporation (ATC), fabricante de los equipos LRAD-RX que utiliza el NSSC para comunicarse con sus agentes en Cuba.

La demanda se fundamentaría en la afectación auditiva que dichos equipos habrían causado a varios operarios del NSSC, sus funcionarios y familiares. Según el demandante, los equipos en cuestión fueron adquiridos menos de un año antes y los expertos de la ATC que entrenaron a quienes se encargarían de utilizarlos en ningún momento les advirtieron contra problemas auditivos.

Según la fuente, la demanda que presentaría el NSSC incluía compensación económica por los daños ocasionados a operarios de los equipos y los familiares afectados de éstos, así como por los perjuicios operativos sufridos por el NSSC.

Inmediatamente el NSSC ordenó discontinuar la utilización del LRAD-RX pero esto implicó un cambio inmediato en los medios de comunicación con sus agentes, lo cual conllevó mayores gastos



que sobrepasaban lo presupuestado.

La penetración del mar en la Embajada a causa del huracán complicó la investigación acerca de los aspectos tecnológicos del caso, porque una parte del equipamiento quedó bajo las aguas del mar y aunque se había planificado el viaje a Cuba de un número de técnicos y especialistas para verificar las condiciones de los equipos, ya este aspecto de la pesquisa resultaba inútil. Hasta aquí los antecedentes que la parte estadounidense omite en su versión de la historia de los supuestos ataques.

Sorpresivamente, en mayo de 2017, el Departamento Estado estadounidense dispuso la expulsión de dos diplomáticos cubanos en respuesta a “incidentes” ocurridos en su embajada en Cuba sin precisar cuáles, ni a quiénes consideraba

culpables.

Según buscadores de Internet, la ATC es una firma con registro comercial estadounidense, pero es también una entidad creada por las fuerzas de la seguridad del estado de Israel. Por la misma fuente se conoce que la LRAD es un arma que emite un sonido que deja temporalmente sordo al adversario.

Sin embargo, cuando las sospechas parecían concentrarse en problemas tecnológicos imputables al suministrador, escandalosas declaraciones del senador estadounidense Marco Rubio “pidiendo sangre contra Cuba” evidenciaron al político republicano de Florida como eje de la manipulación que llevó al retiro del 60 % de los trabajadores de la Embajada en Cuba y la expulsión de quince diplomáticos de la misión cubana en Washington, argumentando la “inexistencia de medidas cubanas adecuadas para proteger a nuestros diplomáticos de los ataques sónicos”, pasando por alto el hecho de que, desde el primer momento, Cuba anunció y cumplió su voluntad de indagar los hechos y compartir las pesquisas en Cuba con el FBI estadounidense.

Observadores de la política estadounidense sostienen que el senador Marco Rubio, que no es cubano ni ha estado jamás en esa isla nación, se ha empeñado hace algún tiempo en convertirse en el primer presidente hispano de Estados Unidos.

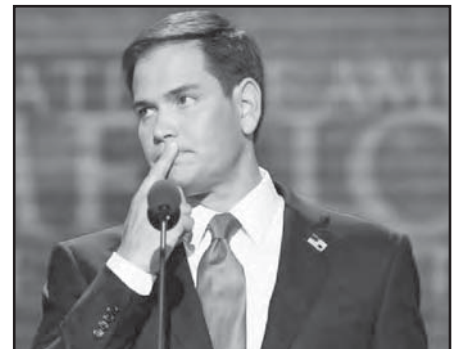
De ahí su obsesión por sobresalir en los medios de prensa y que se haya involucrado de la manera que lo ha hecho con la controvertida figura de Donald Trump, quien tiene como premisa política la de admitir a su lado sólo a “personas menos inteligentes que él”.

Y Rubio cumple ampliamente ese requisito.

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Marco Rubio, senador republicano por el estado de Florida, EE.UU



law, if they put all their energies into making Russia a truly communist society.

And to quicken this coming, we have first to put right Russia's shattered economy. We must consider the solving of our two most immediate tasks – the creation of a well organized and politically conscious labor force and the re-establishment of transport. If our army of labor works well we shall soon have steam engines once more; the railways will begin to function. This means that the working men and women will get the bread and firewood they desperately need.

Getting transport back to normal will speed up the victory of communism. And with the victory of communism will come the complete and fundamental equality of women. This is why the message of "Working Women's Day" must this year be: "Working women, peasant women, mothers, wives and sisters, all efforts to helping the workers and comrades in overcoming the chaos of the railways and re-establishing transport. Everyone in the struggle for bread and firewood and raw materials."

Last year the slogan of the Day of Women Workers was: "All to the victory of the Red Front." Now we call working women to rally their strength on a new bloodless front – the labor front! The Red Army defeated the external enemy because it was organized, disciplined and ready for self sacrifice. With organization, hard work, self-discipline and self sacrifice, the workers' republic will overcome the internal foe – the dislocation (of) transport and the economy, hunger, cold and disease. "Everyone to the victory on the bloodless labor front! Everyone to this victory!"

The New Tasks of Working Women's Day

The October revolution gave women equality with men as far as civil rights are concerned. The women of the Russian proletariat, who were not so long ago the most unfortunate and oppressed, are now in the Soviet Republic able to show with pride to comrades in other countries the path to political equality through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and soviet power.

The situation is very different in the capitalist countries where women are still overworked and underprivileged. In these countries the voice of the working woman is weak and lifeless. It is true that in various countries – in Norway, Australia, Finland and in some of the States of North America – women had won civil rights even before the war.

In Germany, after the Kaiser had been thrown out and a bourgeois republic established, headed by the "compromisers," thirty-six women entered parliament – but not a single communist!

In 1919, in England, a woman was for the first time elected a Member of Parliament. But who was she? A "lady." That means a landowner, an aristocrat.

In France, too, the question has been coming up lately of extending the franchise to women.

But what use are these rights



Top: Palestinian women protest against the Israeli occupation, a day before International Women's Day, March 7, 2015.



Left: Members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers on the picket line, Chicago, 1915.

to working women in the framework of bourgeois parliaments? While the power is in the hands of the capitalists and property owners, no political rights will save the working woman from the traditional position of slavery in the home and society. The French bourgeoisie are ready to throw another sop to the working class, in the face of growing Bolshevik ideas amongst the proletariat: they are prepared to give women the vote.

Mr. Bourg, Sir – It Is Too Late!

After the experience of the Russian October revolution, it is clear to every working woman in France, in England and in other countries that only the dictatorship of the working class, only the power of the soviets can guarantee complete and absolute equality, the ultimate victory of communism will tear down the century-old chains of repression and lack of rights. If the task of "International Working Women's Day" was earlier in the face of the supremacy of the bourgeois parliaments to fight for the right of women to vote, the working class now has a new task: to organize working women around the fighting slogans of the Third International. Instead of taking part in the working of the bourgeois parliament, listen to the call from Russia –

"Working women of all countries! Organize a united proletarian front in the struggle against those who are plundering the world! Down with the parliamentarism of the bourgeoisie! We welcome soviet power! Away with inequalities suffer by the working men and women! We will fight with the workers for the triumph of world communism!"

This call was first heard amidst the trials

of a new order, in the battles of civil war it will be heard by and it will strike a chord in the hearts of working women of other countries. The working woman will listen and believe this call to be right. Until recently they thought that if they managed to send a few representatives to parliament their lives would be easier and the oppression of capitalism more bearable. Now they know otherwise.

Only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of soviet power will save them from the world of suffering, humiliations and inequality that makes the life of the working woman in the capitalist countries so hard. The "Working Woman's Day" turns from a day of struggle for the franchise into an international day of struggle for the full and absolute liberation of women, which means a struggle for the victory of the soviets and for communism!

Down with the world of Property and the Power of Capital!
Away with Inequality, Lack of Rights and the Oppression of Women –
The Legacy of the Bourgeois World!
Forward To the International Unity of Working Women and Male Workers in the Struggle for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat –
The Proletariat of Both Sexes!

*First Published: Mezhdunarodnyi den' rabotnitz, Moscow 1920;
Translated: Alix Holt 1972;
www.marxists.org*

** Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952)
Russian revolutionary leader. During the 1917 Russian Revolution, she was a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party. She was the first woman to be appointed as a Soviet diplomat, as the Ambassador to Norway in 1923. She is renowned for her feminist writings.*

book, "Water and Free Trade" - drawing together 14 experts, again with the same publisher (Lorimer). This book looked at the inclusion of water in trade agreements and what it meant on a public policy level. There was a University of Manitoba Professor who had his students draw up two maps - with all the North American rivers and existing Dams and then a map on top of this - these are transparent - all of the proposed continental water sharing projects that had been put on the table by the engineering firms.

In the late 1950s the US Army Corps of Engineers was told to come up with some options, to keep American from running out of water. So they flew over Canada and mapped all of the water resources of North America. They then met with Canadian and British Columbia officials and the three dams on the Columbia River and a series of dams on the Peace River were planned at that time. The Army Corps of Engineers in effect, although it wasn't phrased this way, planned to be able to create catchment areas in Canada and I guess in Alaska to bring that water down through a series of watercourses into the US.

So I'm reaching in my closet, annoyed at why this project is so doggedly going ahead, and I came across these maps and put them up on my closet mirror. And I can still feel the hair go up on my arms - there is the Peace River and there are the lines right through the Peace River down to the United States. They had different different colour lines for each plan - and they all ran through the Peace River Valley like a rainbow coalition to bring water East here of the Rockies. And really I hadn't focused on that aspect as much as the James Bay Diversion and others when the book was written and I thought "OK, now I get it."

So to me it explains a lot about why there is such a push on this project. Feeling frustrated with all of the other costs and all of the other issues that weren't being talked about - issues of large scale continental water sharing projects - I met with [book publisher] James Lorimer- actually we were in Havana, and I said, "You have to do this a

book on this." And he agreed.

I said that I wanted to draw together people who don't have oar in the water in this - the journalists, the professionals - who know the areas that we want to look at have them write chapters in this book and put it all on the table. So this book includes 15 chapters and includes the writing of a number of names that you would know to look at all of these areas. Andrew MacLeod, Joyce Nelson, Warren Bell, myself, Joan Sawicki, Brian Churchill, David Schindler...

David has a wonderful chapter looking at how dams are really Canada's strategy to hit its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and they've been purported to be "green" - which they are not. In order to meet the targets there are over 100 hydro dams that are planned for Canada. This is going to raise a whole bunch of issues with respect to all of the things we're talking about for communities right across Canada.

Guy Dauncey reviews the costs of alternative energy. Andrew Macleod interviews indigenous organizer Helen Knott on the whole impact of these projects on aboriginal culture. Brian Churchill looks at biodiversity. Zoe Ducklow looks at what this "point of no return" actually means. Donald Cameron, a journalist from Nova Scotia, has written about how communities around the world have entrenched legal rights to the environment in their constitutions such that individual citizens can stand up and

stop projects like this. The very last word in the book is given to dear Rafe Mair, who passed away. He wrote a beautiful chapter on civil disobedience.

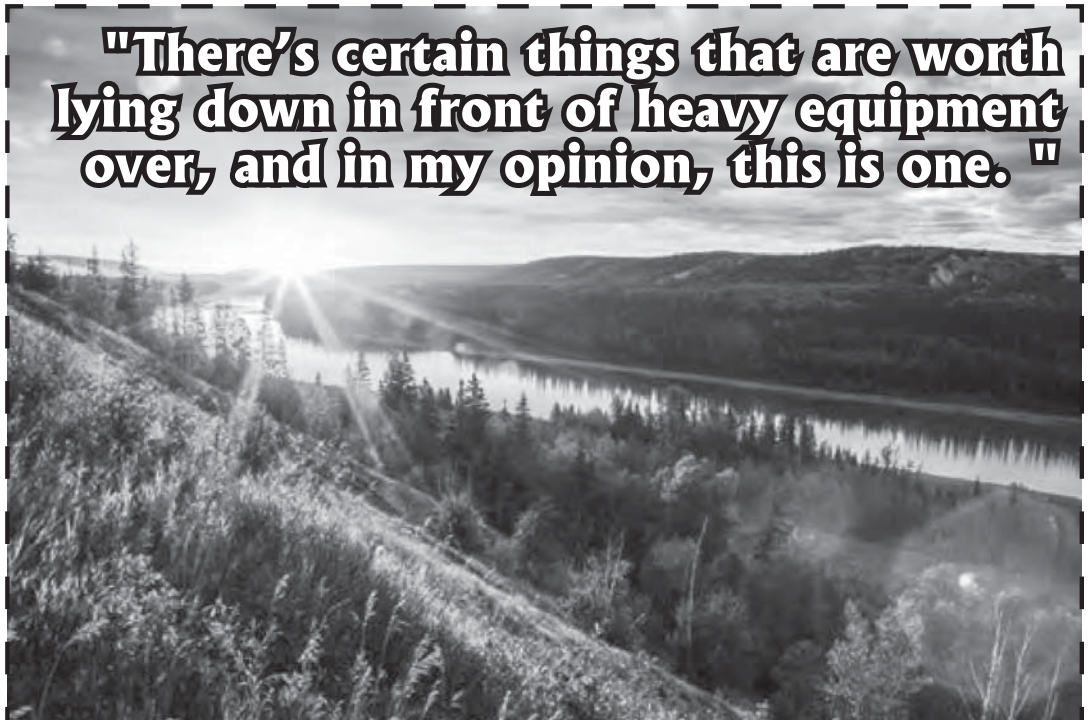
How are you approaching opposing and stopping the dam now that the NDP government has approved the project to go ahead?

I'm an optimist. I still believe in democracy. This book is coming out April 1. Sarah Cox has a book from DeSmog coming out April as well. There's a whole bunch of events that are being planned around this. We are looking at attracting international attention. There's legal fights. We raised \$80,000 for the West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations through the "Yellow Stakes" campaign. There will be more money coming into this now. In this legal action BC Hydro voluntarily stopped work the other day because their injunction is going to be heard July 23. So BC Hydro took the unprecedented step of stopping work pending this injunction. So I think there are a lot of people who are ready to stand up and defend this. I personally am ready to go on the line and defend this with everything I can.

There's certain things that are worth lying down in front of heavy equipment over, and in my opinion, this is one.

That's a good summary! We really appreciate you taking the time to do this interview, and all of your work on this project.

"There's certain things that are worth lying down in front of heavy equipment over, and in my opinion, this is one."



NEW PARLIAMENTARY PETITION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SIGN TODAY!

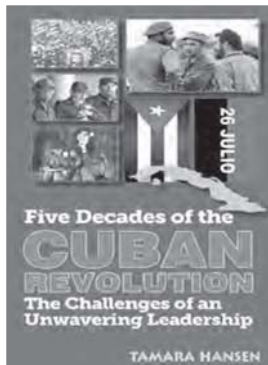
NO TO CANADA'S THREATS & SANCTIONS ON VENEZUELA!

Scan the QR code to sign or visit:
<https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-1353>



Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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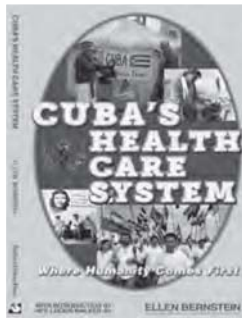
Battle of Ideas Press

CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

"The unfailing dedication of Cuban health care professionals has led to dramatic improvements in quality of life, for millions of people who previously had no other hope of receiving decent medical care. IFCO/Pastors for Peace is pleased to honor the diligent health care professionals of the Cuban health care system. We especially pay tribute to Cuba's national leadership, whose vision of universal health care as a right of every citizen sets an example for the world."

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003. She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.



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For Fire This Time in your area across BC, Canada, and Internationally contact Publicity and Distribution Coordinator Thomas Davies
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We welcome articles, letters, unsolicited submissions, and suggestions. However, we cannot promise publication. Submissions and suggestions can be made by email by contacting firethistimecanada@yandex.com fax, or regular mail. Submissions will not be returned.

The opinions expressed in the newspaper are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of Fire This Time.

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If you would like to help with a donation, please make cheques payable to "Nita Palmer".

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CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 2018

CELEBRATING THE REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN OF CUBA + VENEZUELA!



**MUSIC
SPEAKERS
POETRY
TRIVIA**

SPECIAL SCREENING:
THE CUBAN
FEDERATION
OF WOMEN
DOCUMENTARY
"WITH OUR MEMORY
ON THE FUTURE"

**FRIDAY
MARCH 9**

**CENTRAL
BRANCH
OF THE
VANCOUVER
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**

**350 W. GEORGIA
@ HOMER ST.
DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER
7PM**

VANCOUVER COMMUNITIES IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA @VANCUBA_VCSO
VANCUBASOLIDARITY.COM

**MARKING 15 YEARS SINCE THE INVASION
OF IRAQ**

US OUT OF IRAQ NOW!



**FRIDAY MARCH 16
4:30pm Vancouver Art Gallery**

**Robson at Howe St.
Downtown Vancouver, Canada**

U.S./CANADA/NATO HANDS OFF:
YEMEN • KOREA • IRAN • SYRIA • IRAQ • VENEZUELA •
AFGHANISTAN • LIBYA • NORTH AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST!
•• SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS!
•• SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!

Mobilization Against War & Occupation @MAWOvan

2018

WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG

U.S. + CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!



FRIDAY APRIL 6 2018

1. PROTEST ACTION 4PM
"U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!"
US CONSULATE IN VANCOUVER - 1070 WEST PENDER ST.

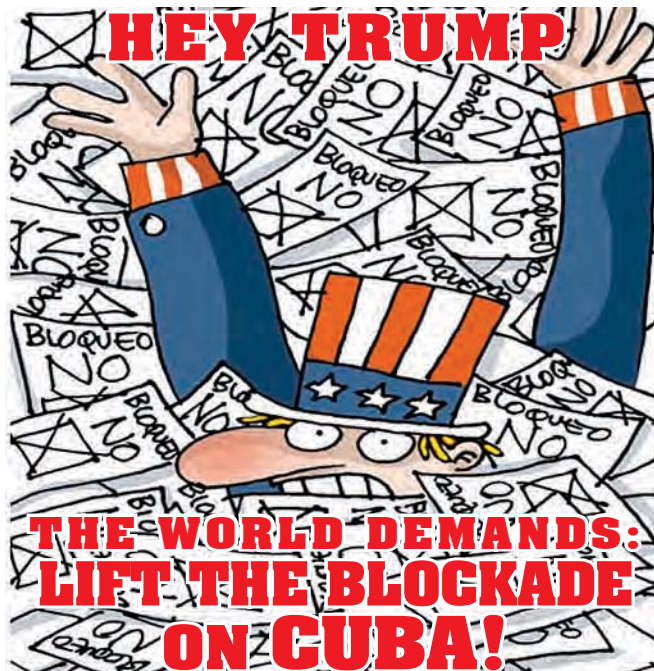
2. INFO TABLING + PETITION 5:30PM
"NO MORE U.S./CANADA SANCTIONS + THREATS!
RESPECT THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!"
VANCOUVER ART GALLERY - ROBSON ST. @ HOWE ST.

FIRE THIS TIME - VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN
WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET



MONTHLY PICKET ACTION

HEY TRUMP



**THE WORLD DEMANDS:
LIFT THE BLOCKADE
ON CUBA!**

RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA!

Saturday, March 17 2018

U.S. CONSULATE 4PM

1075 W. PENDER ST., DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

FRIENDS OF CUBA AGAINST THE U.S. BLOCKADE - VANCOUVER
WWW.VANCUBAVSBLOCKADE.ORG

